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ABSTRACT

This collection of essays examines recent scholarship in history and geography. The readings are for teachers, teacher educators, curriculum coordinators, and developers of curriculum materials. Following a foreword by the series editors, Matthew T. Downey and Joseph P. Stoltman, the essays are: (1) "At Play with Education and History" (Elliott West); (2) "The Topography of Geography: Some Trends in Human Geographic Thinking" (William E. Riebsame); (3) "Implications of New Research and Scholarship in History and Geography for Inservice Teacher Professional Development" (Ruth O. Selig); (4) "Implications of New Research and Scholarship in Geography for K-12 Curriculum Development" (Mary E. Haas); (5) "At Play with Curriculum Development in History" (John Allen Rossi); and (6) "The Implications of New Research and Scholarship in History and Geography for Undergraduate and Teacher Education" (Phil Klein; Fritz Fischer). (Each essay contains references.) (BT)

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New Horizons in History and Geography

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Sarah Witham Bednarz
and Robert S. Bednarz, Editors

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Social Science Education Consortium 2000

Social Science on the Frontier:
New Horizons in History and Geography

Edited by
Sarah Witham Bednarz and Robert S. Bednarz

The Social Science Education Consortium Conference Series

Volume 1

Matthew T. Downey and Joseph P. Stoltman, Senior Editors

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Foreword

The academic disciplines that make up the social sciences continue to advance and define new horizons for scholarship. Individuals within the various social sciences motivate those changes, as do larger social issues. During the past ten years, there has been a major subtle, yet important, shift in two of the disciplines that make up the social sciences—geography and history. Therefore, the Social Science Education Consortium decided to devote its 1999 Annual Conference to examining new frontiers in geography and history. The Consortium also made a commitment to publish a monograph that presented the outcomes of the deliberations and discussions dealing with geography and history.

The approach used to generate materials that would be scholarly, reflective of the social sciences and the social studies, as well as timely with regard to changes in school curricula was to focus narrowly on only two disciplines: geography and history. Noted scholars in each field, William Reibsame (Geography) and Elliott West (History), were each invited to prepare a conference presentation and a publishable manuscript. Following the presentation and extended discussion of each paper, small focus groups were formed to examine the ideas presented in the papers and their consequences for social science/social studies education. Four areas of consequence were of particular interest to the Consortium: (1) inservice professional development of teachers; (2) K-12 curriculum development in geography; (3) K-12 curriculum development in history; and (4) undergraduate and teacher education. The focus group discussions were intended to tease out the detail and provide both breadth and depth relative to the particular discipline. The essays growing out of the focus group discussions thus became the basis for the subsequent chapters.

We believe the model worked quite well to provide a set of papers with considerable direct application to teaching, but also with a direct link to the social science disciplines. Why were we concerned with making that linkage? Scholarship and research move forward at a steady pace. Empirical evidence and conventional wisdom inform us that it takes 20 years or longer between the occurrence of new knowledge, new inventions, new methodologies in the social sciences and their initial appearance in the K-12 curriculum. We believe a monograph such as this will help shorten that span if it and the ideas it includes are accessible to teacher educators, curriculum coordinators, and teachers. Bridging those gaps between the scholarship in the social sciences and social science/social studies education is the mission of the Consortium.

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We further believe that a multidisciplinary social science approach has much to offer teachers and students in this era of rapid and global economic and social change. Few of the big issues and major questions that individuals and societies address are fully treated by any single discipline. More commonly it is a combination of information, concepts, knowledge, and skills from many disciplines that enables people and societies to function in the world today. We cannot think of a better way to help students understand the coming new world order than through disciplined, integrated, social science inquiry. With the help of this monograph, we urge educators to take a fresh look at the social sciences and their dynamics as the basis for the social studies curriculum for the new millennium.

The senior editors of the monograph series would like to thank the editors, Sarah Witham Bednarz and Robert Bednarz, for accepting the task of reading, reflecting on, and suggesting changes to the first drafts of the manuscripts. It was their editorial attention that brought different authors with different styles to a common purpose. We would also like to thank the staff at the Consortium for their willingness to accept yet another challenge in making the social sciences more accessible to teachers and students.

Matthew T. Downey, University of Northern Colorado
Joseph P. Stoltman, Western Michigan University
Senior Editors, SSEC Conference Series
February 2000

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At Play with Education and History

By Elliott West

Abstract

Both history and education often are mistakenly seen as "finite games" with clear goals, discrete beginnings and ends, obvious winners and losers, and lessons that are easily summarized. In fact, each is an "infinite game" that celebrates a diversity of viewpoints and emphasizes our continuity with, and responsibility to, the past and future. Although the history of the American West often is misused as a finite game with clear and simple lessons, in fact it is one of our best examples of an infinite game. Its ancient past is a showcase of diverse cultures and human experiences and of dazzling changes and human adaptation. The relatively recent history since European contact, especially the rise of the horse culture, illustrates both the inventiveness of Native Americans and the dangers inherent in rapid change and human ambition. The broad lessons of western history are of caution and of the wide range of human possibilities.

Keywords: American West, horse culture, Native Americans, history, environment

A friend in Montana recently wrote an essay describing education as an "infinite game." He borrowed the term from the theologian James Carse. A finite game, writes Carse, "is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of continuing the game." Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Tompenaars have suggested other differences. In a finite game, the players' aims are identical; in an infinite game, their goals are diverse. The winners in a finite game exclude the losers; in an infinite game, the winners teach the losers better plays. The energy in a finite game is applied to short-term, decisive contests and

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focuses on how the game ends. In an infinite game, energy is invested in the long term and focuses on keeping the game going.

A basketball contest, for instance, is a finite game. An athletic program is an infinite one. Getting your child through the year without mishap or sickness is a finite game. Living in a family is an infinite game.

There is nothing inherently good or bad about either kind of game. The important thing is to recognize their differences and to know when each is appropriate. We run into problems when we live one part of our life according to one sort of game when we should be living it in terms of the other.

Education, my friend says, is a current example of dangerous game-mixing. We have been practicing education as a finite game. The message to students, sometimes unstated and sometimes explicit, is that they should go to school and work hard so they will earn good grades. Good grades are important for getting into a good university. A strong university degree is needed to get a good job. Without a good job, the message ends, you will more likely sink in our society, slip backward in relation to others. In other words, you will lose.

One practical implication of this approach is to make education essentially a competitive enterprise in which all players are expected to have the same goals. Another is to place enormous value on keeping abreast of what is changing most rapidly in our society—this season's technological innovation, the problem this particular administration decides is most pressing, this year's new approach to this or that (including teaching and scholarship).

Keeping up with change is not only OK, it's a vital part of adjusting to opportunity. But as educators we get into trouble when we see this part of the job as not a means but an end—when keeping track of the latest trends becomes the purpose of education.

A school's essential function is not to adjust to changing circumstances or to show students how to adjust. Training students with immediately applicable skills is perfectly fine; putting computers in the classrooms is a grand idea; teaching new methodologies is something to which we should all pay attention. But these are subsidiary purposes and helpful tools, not education's essential responsibilities. Mistaking them for the purpose of teaching is like making the servicing of our cars the goal of taking a vacation.

A school's prime purpose, rather, is to identify, refine, expand, and pass on cultural knowledge that has developed over centuries and will continue to be useful for centuries to come. Its focus should be on helping students to think in the long run and to find in themselves the intel-

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lectual and intuitive skills to cultivate values and ideas worth keeping. It should help students understand their responsibilities within larger communities, including the communities of ancestors they never knew and descendants they will never see. In short, schools should engage students in an infinite game.

History and the Infinite Game

History, like education generally, is an obvious example of an infinite game often misplayed as a finite one. In fact, history and education are often misused simultaneously. We can all think of well-meaning or self-serving persons, some in charge of countries and others sitting around barbershops, who have invoked history in the name of instructing us on some clear lesson in the particular case they are arguing.

"History teaches us that...," they usually begin, then proceed to fish some lesson out of the past and apply it to an issue of the day. We are told, for instance, that history teaches us that regulating firearms will quickly be followed by tyrants trampling on individual liberties. History teaches us that Republicans are forever pulling money from the workingman's pocket and giving it to the rich. History teaches us that Jews control Wall Street and decide what movies are made. All such lessons are meant not for contemplation but for action. They are supposed to compel us to oppose gun control, vote Democratic, distrust bankers, boycott movies, and do all sorts of things supposedly dictated by the logic of the past.

A finite game has a start and a finish and definite goals; when played this way, history becomes a tool in the most traditional meaning of the word. Studying the past has a clearly defined purpose; we expect it to produce definite answers to specific problems in the here-and-now. A finite game also is essentially a competition with clear winners and losers, and so historical inquiry also becomes a kind of weapon. Bits and pieces of the past are cobbled together into something meant to convince people that one action is clearly preferable over another.

Obviously, we need memory for practical answers in living hour-to-hour. Better not speed, I remind myself, because I can't afford another ticket or another wreck. I trust my boss—she has always told the truth—but that guy across the street has told me more lies than I have toes, fingers, and ears. We play history as a finite game dozens of times a day in coping with such immediate and limited situations. But when we try to use the past to answer questions that are only slightly broader, the facts to consider expand geometrically. Quickly the range of variables is bewildering. Those who find nicely focused lessons do so only by start-

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ing with the conclusion they want, then rummaging through the enormous range of meanings possible in the historical record until they find the one they need. Then they point to their conclusion, which now sits at the end of their carefully selected chain of evidence, and tell us that "history teaches us" what they prefer us to believe and do.

Players of history as a finite game love to quote the philosopher George Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." This is surely one of the most abused aphorisms of the modern age. It has been trotted out countless times to justify one agenda or another. At the very least, it encourages a simplistic view of history. Too often it has been a weapon put to the most grotesque purposes. Its line of reasoning has been used by the most prominent monsters of our century: Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, and others. Anyone tempted to follow its lead should keep one image in mind. As Jim Jones directed the mass suicides among his cult followers in Guyana, as children were given cyanide-laced Koolaid and resisting men and women chased down and murdered, Jones sat in a chair with Santayana's famous advice written on a plaque above his head.

History is far better played as an infinite game. Instead of using it to search for clear truths and answers fitting one side or another on cleanly divided questions, it is much more rewarding (and certainly more interesting) to look backward for a different sort of understanding. We can read the past in search of intricate connections that reveal fundamental and enduring patterns in the human story. In attacking specific problems and making particular decisions, these patterns are about as useful as a Shakespearean sonnet or a haiku by Basho. They offer another kind of value, however. They illuminate the human condition and suggest where we fit within it. They emphasize the breathtaking diversity of human perspectives and values. They show us how the values of our own day are the products of conditions and human understanding that have changed through time and will continue to change, and thereby challenge us to examine and refine the guiding principles of our own individual character and those of our societies.

These sorts of lessons are practical in a deeper and more significant sense. They situate us. They help us find that fundamental stance from which we can act with a more deeply rooted confidence. These lessons emphasize the diversity of past experience and, paradoxically, the continuity within that diversity. They show us our own connections to the past and to the world around us. By doing that, they cultivate our responsibility to live dutifully and thoughtfully within those connections and that continuity.

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Western History and the Infinite Game

No part of American history has been misplayed more often as a finite game than that of the West. Politicians, journalists, culture critics, and frontporch philosophers have found it endlessly fruitful in simple lessons applied to current problems and behavior. Most common has been an invocation of pioneer virtues and a call to emulate our frontier ancestors. We've slid a long way from that golden time, we are told. We need to crawl out of our current slough of soft living, dependence on government, and fuzzy moralities, the argument goes, and pull ourselves back toward lives of individualism, self-reliance, and dedication to simple principles.

Listen to one recent critic. Many of today's social and individual ills, he writes, are traceable to the spread of big government and the intrusion of overblown, manipulative technologies. The typical American has been left vulnerable to a variety of threats, "nuclear accidents, carcinogens in his food, environmental pollution, invasion of his privacy by large organizations," as well as psychological dislocations. Things were better in earlier times when individuals were responsible for their own survival, well-being, and immediate needs. As an American model for this healthier life, he points to the Old West. "Modern man has the sense (largely justified) that change is *imposed* upon him," he suggests, "whereas the 19th century frontiersman had the sense (also largely justified) that he created change by himself." History teaches us, he argues in that familiar rhetorical pattern, that we must return to those golden days of yesteryear, and as with all who play finite games, he calls for specific actions of the us-versus-them sort. Certainly he found a few direct applications of his own. This critic, Theodore Kaczynski, known also as the Unabomber, murdered and maimed several persons with explosive devices he made while living out his reading of the past in a rude frontier cabin in the Montana mountains. Like Jim Jones, Kaczynski found in the past—in this case the western past—clear guideposts for living day-to-day. And as in Jonestown, the consequences were not good.

The irony is that the West, as badly as it has been used as a finite game, is also one of the most welcoming arenas for infinite play. Accept the invitation, and you will find plenty to learn and think about.

What follows is a very modest suggestion of how one slice of the western past—that of the central Great Plains, the general vicinity around the offices of the Social Science Education Consortium in Boulder, Colorado, and the site of the 1999 Annual Conference—can illustrate the value of playing history in such a way. I will also approach this place on the plains from the opposite direction. Besides suggesting how

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western history can encourage us to think in terms of infinite games, that is, I am suggesting how playing such games encourages new views of western history. Specifically, I will ignore entirely events that traditionally dominate the story–gold rushes, cattle ranches and cowboys, cavalry, and railroads. My western history will reach back a bit further.

It's a Very Old Game...

To begin with the obvious: If we are looking for continuity, we will see the West as the scene of some of the oldest history in the western hemisphere. The question of just how and where the first immigrants came into North America is a hot one nowadays. But except for a newly emerging theory of possible movement from northern Europe across the polar ice pack into eastern Canada, most archaeological opinion agrees that the earliest migration occurred during the most recent glaciation and that it came out of what is now Siberia, across or along an exposed land bridge the size of Poland, into western Canada, and from there into the present western United States. Estimates of the sequence and time vary, but this immigration probably began between 15 and 20 thousand years ago. Southward-bound peoples may have skirted the Pacific coast in boats, settling first in Washington, Oregon, and California. Or they may have stayed farther inland and moved through an open passageway between the ice sheets covering much of Canada. If so, they would have emptied onto the northern Great Plains. Probably they would have continued their migration along the base of the eastern face of the Rocky Mountains. They would have passed through what is now Boulder; the offices of the Social Science Education Consortium may be built on the spot that felt some of the first footfalls made on our continent (MacLeish 1994; Petit 1998).

Native Americans recall differently their ancestors' arrival, and such critics as Vine Deloria, Jr. argue that these explanations of human presence should be treated as seriously as those of archaeologists (Deloria 1995). The accounts vary from people to people, but the most recurring narrative tells of a journey into the present world, often from other worlds in Earth below and sometimes from the heavens. These journeys are full of challenges and tests. Through them, Indian peoples earn both their identities and the land they inhabit; the two are truly inseparable; neither people nor places have meaning without the other. These narratives set no dates on these events. They usually happen "a long time ago." The theme once again is antiquity and continuity of people and places, and although these accounts are rooted in every part of the continent, it is in the West where this continuity is most obvious.

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Patricia Nelson Limerick recently wrote that "the center of gravity of American Indian affairs is in the West," where we find most of the land that is still under tribal sovereignty and the majority of Indian peoples (Limerick 1996).

Classroom teachers often ask their students to name the oldest town in the United States. The answer they have in mind usually is St. Augustine, Florida, and their purpose is to emphasize that the English were not the first Europeans to settle here. But in fact that answer is as wrong as Jamestown or Plymouth. Our oldest town is either Acoma, New Mexico, or Old Oraibi, Arizona, continually inhabited since at least 1100 A.D. and perhaps as early as 800 A.D. American history starts in the West, not the East. It is in the West that we can best appreciate the full range and depth of the human experience on this continent.

We can look to western history, that is, to find the longest unbroken thread into the deep American past, whether that thread leads across Beringia and into Siberia, or into the earth itself. Teachers might turn to this very old story to illustrate, first, that American history does not begin with the arrival of Europeans but with the earliest human experiences. Beyond that, they might find here a fine example of how even the most fundamental events ought to be imagined from multiple viewpoints. In this case the start of our continental history—the arrival of the first actors in the American story—is told in radically different ways through Indian creation narratives and works of archaeology. Discussion of these perspectives can lead to basic issues, both of historical evidence and respect for various viewpoints.

Whether or not the route through the ice sheets and onto the plains was in fact the path of our first migrants, the plains, including eastern Colorado, hold some of the oldest evidence of human presence in our hemisphere. Hunting peoples of the Clovis culture inhabited much of the western half of North America about 12 thousand years ago, preying on the prolific herds of wild game that flourished during the waning centuries of the ice age. As the glaciation faded and the climate changed and new patterns of vegetation emerged, these hunting cultures gave way to others that in turn evolved into others, all of them responding and adapting to environmental fluctuations and influences from elsewhere. The central Great Plains, dismissed and literally looked down upon as "the flyover" by travelers who see it only from jets zooming past at 30 or so thousand feet, in fact have been a busy crossroads of many cultures for most of their history. Standing on the Colorado plains, one would have met persons and seen goods from Mexico and the Pacific coast, from the Appalachians and Gulf coast, from the Ohio Valley and north Atlantic coast, all of them passing through along a nexus of vigorous travel and trade.

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Among the most heavily traveled routes ran up and down along the eastern face of the Rockies, northward deep into the present Canadian province of Alberta, and southward to New Mexico's Rio Grande valley and beyond it to Mexico. As already noted, some of the first arrivals on the continent may have taken this trail, and it apparently witnessed continuous traffic for thousands of years. Archaeological evidence from at least nine thousand years ago reveals camps in the vicinity of Boulder, Fort Collins, Denver, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo; settlements of Spanish New Mexico were raided by warriors who had taken the trail from the Canadian plains; present-day Blackfeet recall stories of their men traveling southward on three-year odysseys to trade and fight with the "dark skinned people." In the 1890s, a young Yale graduate, Walter McClintock, lived among the Blackfeet, traveled the route, and wrote its story as *The Great North Trail*. Today traffic continues roughly along this ancient pathway, renamed for our use as Interstate 25 (McClintock 1910, 1999; Stark 1997).

Anyone wishing to look a little farther into the deep history of this region of the Great North Trail that passed by the SSEC offices might look at the fascinating work of James Benedict. From his home in Ward, Colorado, a short way into the mountains from Boulder, Benedict has studied for years the long human story of his larger neighborhood. Piecing together many archaeological investigations, Benedict describes what he calls the "Great Rotor," a cycle of migration sustaining people in this region for millennia. During winters, plains people lived in camps along streams at the base of the Rockies, an area protected by the mountains from the worst of the season's weather. Early in the spring they would move northward along the mountains, then into sheltered mountain valleys, where they would quarry stone for tools and weapons. By mid-summer they were high in the Rockies hunting the game that migrated there. They constructed long stone walls to channel frightened herds of animals into ambushes; some of these, in what are the upper reaches of Rocky Mountain National Park, were more than 100 meters long. As summer waned, they moved lower to sites where they processed the meat, then drifted back to their winter camps, ready for the long, cold months. Early Americans were living this pattern at least six thousand years ago; some were still following it as recently as 1720 (Benedict 1978; Benedict 1985a; Benedict 1996).

...And a Diverse One...

Is there any other part of America that better demonstrates how history, as an infinite game, connects us to peoples of the past? That sug-

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gests how "playing" history this way invites us to look for enduring patterns in our collective experience? The cities along the Front Range from Trinidad in the south to Fort Collins at the north—growing and inching toward one another and raising the possibility of an unbroken splay of development from the Wyoming to the New Mexico border—are set in a landscape many cultures have found congenial. When we look for continuing patterns of human experience, this stretch offers us one: a dance, thousands of years old, between people and place, history and geography. Those who lived by the "Great Rotor" encourage us to think in the long term and to discover respectful means of living that might sustain us for at least a small fraction of that earlier way of life. The vast net of their trade and movement reminds us that the West has always been an integral part of much wider arrangements.

For me, this long story raises another speculation. How many different peoples called this region home over those millennia? The place we call Colorado must have seen an extraordinary array of cultures. How did they mesh with one another? We know there were influences from the eastern mound builders, from southwestern village-dwellers, and from mountain peoples out of the northwest. Routes to the east almost certainly funneled through trading towns in the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys that reached their zenith around the 12th century. The largest was Cahokia, near modern St. Louis. Until the early 18th century, when Philadelphia surpassed the highpoint of population Cahokia had achieved about 600 years earlier, this economic and religious center could claim to be the largest urban concentration in North American history. Its enormous mounds, some in the shape of serpents and other animals, must have made it a true hemispheric wonder. Cahokia's cultural aura surely glowed across the plains and into the Rockies, merging and blending with others from other directions.

People of the high plains lived at what must have been one of the continent's more interesting cultural intersections. What ideas and beliefs did they swap along with grizzly claws, parrot feathers, ceramic bowls, and mica? A rocky hill overlooking the taffy shops and boutiques of today's Estes Park was the site of religious ceremonies, probably variations of spirit quests, from the time Moses ascended Sinai until the early 19th century (Benedict 1985b). What visions of the sacred were born and celebrated on that stony hilltop? Which faces has God shown all those who have worshipped here? Besides telling us of that deeply rooted relation between humans and the land, our look into the long past reminds me of the continuing history of enmeshing among many peoples on this ancient meeting ground.

Teachers might build on this vision of an older West to raise other issues of particular interest to recent historians. In the 19th and 20th

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centuries, these writers emphasize, the West has been a land of cultural convergence. From all points of the compass, disparate peoples have come into the country, with the flood increasing dramatically during the past generation or so. Looking only at the march of population from east-to-west, in the usual frontier tradition, the crowd was far more mixed than many might think. Besides the usual blue-eyed Anglos, westward expansion brought Irish, Germans, Italians, Czechs, Scandinavians, and many more. The experience of African Americans, woefully neglected by historians until recently, now has been illuminated in a superb new study by Quintard Taylor (1998). The immigrant flow from two other directions—south-to-north and west-to-east—has caused special alarm, to the point that considerable support is building for a new round of immigration restrictions, especially on movement from Latin America and Asia.

Our oldest history, however, emphasizes that this is nothing new. Far from it. If archaeologists are correct, Asians were our first immigrants; if Native American traditions are true, the West has always been an extraordinary patchwork of many peoples of many beginnings. Some critics today speak of the south-to-north movement as if it is a recent phenomenon, but it is arguably the continent's oldest continuing migratory pattern, reaching back at least a few thousand years. If antiquity is the basis for naming places, in fact, we should adopt the perspective of that hallowed, well-worn path of movement and call this country "the North" or "el Norte," not "the West." As David Gutierrez has written, this point of view challenges the usual telling of western history at a fundamental level (Gutierrez 1996). In any case, recalling the ancient crisscrossing of this territory by so many peoples and influences is one way to establish in our minds an enduring pattern: today, before the time of Christ, and throughout the period between, the West has been a great stewpot of cultures where people have met, fought, exchanged goods and thoughts and traditions, and for the most part have managed to co-exist.

...And One of Different Visions...

The earliest exchanges among peoples and places had many variations over time, of course. For much of the period before European contact, people in our part of the West relied heavily on hunting and foraging; even after horticulture was introduced from Mexico and spread to most of the humid East, gardening was not feasible except in a few isolated parts of the high plains. But about 1200 years ago, the plains climate changed dramatically. The line of semiaridity, marking

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the point where the average annual rainfall dropped below 20 inches, moved from central Kansas westward deep into Colorado. Soon hamlets and vigorous gardens were sprouting along virtually every stream of even modest flow, and the high plains experienced something of a population boom. For the next few centuries, there were more Indian peoples living on the central plains than at anytime before or since. Then, in the 13th century, the climate slipped back toward its previous pattern, and the line of semiaridity retreated eastward. Gardening peoples followed it. Scores of small villages, perhaps hundreds of them, were abandoned as the plains emptied of population.

Here teachers might find another enduring pattern. We think of the relatively recent West as a place of alternating boom and disaster and of people being tossed about by the vicissitudes of an erratic climate. That is true enough. The dry years of the 1890s, the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, and the great drought of the 1950s battered farmers and ranchers and drove tens of thousands out of the country. Looking far back into plains history, we can see much longer swings of climate change that lured farmers into the interior, only to push them away later. Comparing the experiences can help students keep the more contemporary events in some perspective. On the one hand, we might see the disasters of the last century as simply a recent reprise of a far older recurring cycle. This is simply life on the plains, we might say. On the other hand, the contrasts are much more illuminating. Scholarship of the last generation has emphasized how the economic culture of the newest wave of plains settlement has set it apart. A capitalist, market-oriented farmer and rancher makes decisions more on the grounds of commodity prices and potential profit than on how he and his people can best live on the land they work (Worster 1979; Robbins 1994). This relative detachment of people from immediate environmental consequences, plus, of course, the modern plainsman's far greater technological capacity to affect the land, sets the recent disasters well apart from the earlier cases of people living with a temperamental climate. The patterns of the deep past, in this case, can help us understand our present difficulties by throwing them into rather stark relief.

With the retreat of the farmers, the high plains once more became a place of dispersed and probably nomadic peoples who gathered wild plants and their seeds and hunted large and small game. The human shuffle continued. More groups moved in from the south, and probably in the 15th century Athapaskan peoples, ancestors of Apaches, immigrated out of the northwest and took up residence on the high plains.

Coronado found these bands when he arrived in the 1540s. He called them Querechos and looked on them with a mix of curiosity and contempt. They lived in small conical tents, his chronicler wrote, drank

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the blood of bison, painted their bodies, and chipped flint with their teeth. Not far to the east he found horticultural people living in permanent villages with gardens of corn and gourds.

The reaction of these first European visitors was interesting and, in a way, prophetic. Culturally and historically, the Spanish considered these people as flat as the land itself. There was no depth here, little indication that much had happened in the past or that much in the present was worth noting. It seemed a place beyond history, outside any continuity to the past or connection to anywhere else. Coronado, that is, gave this West something very much like the modern outsider's dismissive glance. He looked on it as the 16th-century equivalent of the great flyover. He would not be the last to underestimate this country and to overlook its lessons.

In fact, the Spanish were setting loose another series of adaptations, changes, and migrations. Their invasion of the Southwest, with the intrusion of French from the North and East, triggered great dislocations of native peoples and brought great changes to their material lives. New items were pumped into old channels of trade—blankets, knives, iron pots, spear and arrow points, hide scrapers, and much more. The network of human contact, dozens of centuries old, felt a sudden jolt and surge. The ancient story took a new turn. Undreamt-of goods moved along the worn commercial grooves that had connected the country around Boulder with the Great Lakes and Mississippi towns; they moved up and down the Old North Trail and almost certainly were sucked into the Great Rotor. With this must have come as well a quickening of an always vigorous exchange of ideas and beliefs.

...And One of Risks and Cautions

Of even greater importance was the introduction of a new living actor in western history. The horse permitted plains natives to alter the fundamental relationship between themselves and their surroundings. As a domesticated animal it put them in command of the power and speed to hunt, fight, and move around the country more easily and successfully than they could have imagined. But the deeper advantage was not quite so obvious. The new animal ally was a herbivore. As the fuel for its prodigious strength, it drew on the prolific grasses that always had been useless to humans except as food for some of the animals they hunted. Plains Indians, in other words, suddenly were able to tap into an unimaginably enormous reservoir of energy that before this had always been denied them.

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In the millennia-old game of people finding ways to live on and with the land, no single new idea or thing had such a potential to move the play so sharply in a new direction. Although plains Indians had their first contact with horses during Coronado's *entrada*, it was not until the Pueblo insurrection of 1680 that large numbers of the animals began to be traded out of New Mexico northward into the Rockies and eastward onto the plains. In only 100 years, hardly a few blinks in terms of cultural adaptation, plains peoples had integrated this animal and its potential into their economic and social lifeways.

Now that the horse allowed humans to exploit the potential energy stored in the grasses, the region's appeal soared. New groups moved in with unprecedented vigor and speed, drawn by the promise of one of the world's largest pastures, as well as pushed by the expanding Anglo American frontier out of the East. The Comanches became the dominant force on the southern plains, joined later by the Kiowas immigrating out of the northern Rockies. From the east came the Arapahoes, Cheyennes, and western Sioux (Lakotas). These groups jockeyed for position, fought and allied with each other. The Apaches were shoved out early, south and west into New Mexico and beyond. The Pawnees, Wichitas, and others in villages on the eastern plains, descendants of those gourd-growers met by Coronado, fought bitterly with the horseback peoples for control of the great herds of bison on which both relied.

From one perspective, this development, called by the rather anemic term "the rise of the horse culture," was a magnificent and astonishing performance. Rarely if ever in our own recent American history have people adapted so rapidly and with such imagination to a new challenge and opportunity. The story takes on even greater drama when set in its longer context. Recalling the many changes that preceded it, and keeping in mind as well the coming of white farmers and ranchers that would follow, the flowering of this new way of life was arguably the most glorious burst of creative energy we can find among the millennia of human experience.

From another perspective, however, the story of this new culture was another among many that should give us pause as we review the play of this infinite game. The horseback Indians in many ways built a life of greater material abundance. They could kill more animals, trade for more goods, cover more territory, live in larger tipis. But within a generation or so, troublesome signs began to appear. The larger and growing population of people and horses—plains bands needed at least six horses per person to make this new life work, and some had as many as 10 per person—began to degrade some of the habitats they required for survival, especially the wooded and sheltered bottoms of rivers and streams they occupied during the winter months. Along with other

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forces of change, Indian hunters were killing bison at such a clip that the seemingly endless herds began to shrink alarmingly by the 1850s.

This most remarkable episode of plains settlement and adaptation, that is, was also a variation of the old story of human miscalculation and of the gap that always yawns between ambition and reality. As good as they were, the horseback Indians were facing the need to adjust their dreams to the demands of this very old homeland.

In this, teachers can find a final lesson—one that might have a particular pull on many students. No image of the American West is more pervasive than that of Indians on horseback. All of us grew up reading about and seeing such an image in novels, comic books, television shows, and movies. Explicitly or implicitly, the stories always portray these people as having lived such a life for time immemorial, and they are always described as being in something close to perfect balance with their environment. White pioneers, that is, are portrayed as entering a place of stasis and timelessness. Pioneers are pictured as setting history in motion.

In fact, however, whites were not starting history. They were adding their experiences to an elaborate history layered thousands of years deep on this land. Those who moved from east to west were latecomers into their continent's most ancient historical region; in the exact opposite of their own terminology, they were entering the old world as they left a newer one. What they found when they arrived on the plains was the most recent manifestation of dozens of centuries of adaptation and movement. The horseback Indians were among the most innovative and daring of many cultures who had come into this country—Clovis hunters, participants in the Great Rotor, traders and raiders traversing the Old North Trail, travelers over the many routes weaving into this country from all directions, village farmers, foragers and warriors and priests, all of them involved in one of the western hemisphere's longest-running dramas.

As a field for the infinite game, we can see, in this part of the West, the great diversity of past experience and wide range of ambitions. People have made many things out of the West, and we can be sure that they will continue to do so. We can also find recurring patterns. The varied cultures who have found their way to this country discovered in its geography the inspiration for many different goals. As they pursued those goals, they acted on the land and made it into something it had never been before. But they also discovered that their ambitions, whatever the specifics, were ultimately hemmed in by this changing geography and its evolving demands, including the environment's responses to the changes they brought. Everyone who has lived

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on the plains has had to engage in this delicate negotiation: defining what they wanted, pursuing it, seeing what worked and what did not, adapting and backpeddling, finding new meanings and possibilities. Some were more successful than others.

None, however, can claim to have found any ultimate meaning in this place. No one—certainly not the current residents—ever should. That is because our ultimate purpose is simply to keep the game going. Our responsibility here is not to puzzle out some single answer but rather to recognize our place in a long continuum. If there are lessons, I think they are ones of humility and patience. Be careful. Remember that we are walking where others have walked for a very long time. Recall the possibilities seen in the past and the problems that have come when people have pushed too hard. If we learn what we can about the many links in the chain leading up to ours, we will naturally be more likely to keep in mind that many links will be added in the future. Ours has no more claim to this place than any before or after us.

Teaching the Game

Studying western history this way, then, is a double caution. We come away from it humbler about where we fit and how we might act in this remarkable part of the world. And we appreciate the silliness in trying to find in the past clear answers to distinct questions. We learn to shy away from advice beginning with "history teaches us that...."

Instead we should lop off the last two words, then listen again. "History teaches," but in a sense rarely used by demagogues and barroom pundits. In its Old English origins, "teach" has nothing to do with providing immediately applicable skills or precise guides to action. Rather, to teach originally meant to point someone in a general direction, by implication drawing on experience. By this meaning, teachers give us some thoughts on what they have learned, ask us to mull it over, and suggest how we might use our thoughts to examine our developing lives and to consider where they ought to be moving.

The American West, in all its diversity and its long past, is a good place for teachers and learners to play at education and at history as infinite games.

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The Topography of Geography: Some Trends in Human Geographic Thinking

By William E. Riebsame

Abstract

As a geographer trained in the early 1970s, when academic departments of geography were closing down and the future looked bleak, I am pleased to report that Geography is alive and well, and the human side of the field (geography also includes many physical scientists whose work has little to do with human culture), is especially vibrant. I explore two aspects of human geography long of interest to educators: the concept of regions and how we define them, and the human relationship with nature. The multifaceted field of geography defies comprehensive review, but these two subjects nicely contrast traditional and modern (dare I say postmodern) geographical scholarship and speak to an audience beyond geography and academia. The regional concept is down for the count in positivist geography because it was not supported by the data, but it now flourishes in cultural geography. Environment and society studies also flourish as people worry about global change, species loss, and the host of other threats posed by industrial society.

Keywords: regions, American West, global change, environmental perception, geography

Re-thinking Regions

It may surprise some to learn that, in many ways, geographers have rejected the notion of "region." Yes, "world regions" classes are still taught, but this is more out of habit and ease than out of scholarly argument. As a geographer who entered the field during the early-1970s, I

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was trained to expect that "regions" actually existed in a firm foundation of geographical phenomena, that they could be mapped and described, and that their essential attributes separated them from other regions in objective ways, which geographers could discover through "spatial statistics." So in writing this chapter, perhaps I am attempting to exorcise the suppressed memory of this *particular* alien abduction by regional geographers, abduction from the real world where all things are "constructed" by people's minds, and understanding of things social, from the outside and from the inside, is fluid and self-referencing (so-called "postmodernism"). We now argue, under the notion of "regionalism" instead of "regional geography," that people annihilate, re-define, and reconstruct regions and places for many reasons (from federal budget battles to the gender wars). Nevertheless, I still would like to address traditional regional geography because some of the emerging uses of regionalism, and recent vigor breathed into things western in the United States, seem founded on quite traditional geographic notions of regional exceptionalism and homogeneity.

For decades geographers pursued a form of spatial discriminant analysis, or "areal differentiation," to identify regions from the messy spread of human activity across the globe. We mixed natural and social features, trying to find the exceptional and the *sine qua non* of a region—the boundary. To define a region, one had to say, "OK, this is the edge of it—you're in it, and you, over there, are not." Inside that boundary we postulated a homogeneity of exceptionalism (that is, geographical differences among regions are larger than differences within a region), a pattern that the data routinely violated—something like the patterns that show that the market structures economists postulate simply don't exist.

Some of this attachment to region was founded in academic politics. Geographers were pressed to differentiate their field from cognate areas like anthropology, political science, and history. They had to be able to argue to the dean, in ways that the other disciplines seemed never to be forced to, why the geography department should not be closed down to save money and free-up FTEs. So geographers said that they studied everything in its locational and spatial configuration and used maps as the signature tool of analysis. That got us hung up on regions and other things that could be mapped and quantified and, of course, demanded that we define boundaries; we had to draw lines on maps that separated things, like voting blocs, the Rocky Mountains, Appalachia, or farming areas. Geographers knew the lines were fictionally rigid and precise, but used them anyhow.

Regionalization was also a professional tool for understanding the earth, one to which geographers felt strong attachment. Strabo called a

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geographer "the person who describes the parts of the earth." Hatshorne, in his classic book, *The Nature of Geography* (1939), argued that the region was the aperture through which geography could practice its *integrative* and *synthetic* analysis of the earth's surface, thus invoking the field's claim as an integrator of other disciplines. In short, regional identification and analysis became geography's equivalent of supply/demand curve in economics, or the era (e.g., "the 60s") in history.

This effort to conjure regions from geographical data—and even the notion of a region—lost credence in academic geography in the late-1970s for two reasons. First, it simply was not supported in the data and on the maps or, in order to work, required us to state arbitrary criteria that seemed silly to non-geographers (e.g., the Midwest ends where the corn ends). Geographers got around this in the 1960s and 1970s by trying to define functional regions that transcended distance to incorporate linkages that made, say, commerce in New York more similar to commerce in London than to Hoboken. As Kimble (1951) argued in his critique of the regional concept, "it is the links in the landscape...rather than the breaks that impress."

Second, the rise of the geographical conditions of postmodernity, marked especially, according to geographer Harvey, by "an intense phase of time-space compression" (1989, 284), provided an explanation for why regions could not be identified as enduring geographical features. This, though, left us wondering whether we had once successfully found regions that were now annihilated by modernization, or whether we had never really found them in the first place. The stage was set for a small revival of regional analysis in the 1980s.

While academic geographers contested or abandoned regional analysis, Americans continued to embrace regionalism, gleefully inventing and re-inventing American regions and sub-regions as they saw fit, for multiple reasons—political, economic, cultural—and perhaps as antidote to place homogenization, what John Kunstler (1993) called the "geography of nowhere." Right through their disciplinary disappearance, region and place came to mean *more* to people (at least to non-geographers). In fact, the new, flexible ways to organize and perceive time and space, linked especially to post-industrial elasticity of production systems, have perhaps *rescued* region and place from their eradication by modernity. Have I seen this movie before—just as academic geographers declare something unimportant, the public discovers its importance (e.g., "geographic literacy," which we had given up on and had to re-insert into academic geography).

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The New Regional Geography

Traditional regional geography consisted of finding and describing spatially homogenous sub-sets of people and their stuff on Earth's surface. The new regional geographies seek non-homogeneity, and stress diversities, tensions, and the messiness of place. Some geographers, heedless of the criticism about "old wine in new bottles," tried consciously to create a "new regional geography." They could not abide the situation in which we said regions do not exist while people ignored us and kept inventing uniqueness of place and region, or, worse, as colleagues in cognate fields pointed out that regions appeared to matter more and more to people and started writing quite successful regionally based books. We decided we had better re-attend to regions—no easy matter following a decadal exegesis of regional courses from geography curricula.

The new regional geographers pay more attention, of course, to how a region is constructed by the people who live there, and by outsiders' perceptions, giving less attention to whether the region has essential qualities that actually affect how it is construed and how human affairs evolve in it (Murphy 1991). In this way, the new regional geography uses region as a context to human action and less a determinant (see Thrift 1987, 1991, and 1993; Pudup 1988; and Gilbert 1988). The latter is carefully refracted through the strong taboo against determinism, especially regional and environmental determinism. The "regions" problematized by the new regional geographers are still the loosely defined West's, or Southwest's, or South's, but mostly they neglect geographical location and do not feel obliged to bother with questions about whether the regions themselves are geographical entities with identifiable boundaries.

Some of the new regional geographers try to transcend the old regional ideas with what might be called "new wine in old bottles": the notion of "place" as locally expressed differentiation in space, mostly defined by identity. We talk about gendered places or places that demonstrate power (e.g., gated subdivisions), attempting to apprehend universal processes like the extraction of capital from labor, as they play out in particular places. These new regional geographers add place to identity politics—and do a good job of it (Entrikin 1994). When writing of the West—the American region I know the best—the new regionalists reside comfortably with the (non-academic) New Western writers like William Kittredge, Terry Tempest Williams, etc., who produce the stuff of this new placedness and reassign people to western places and landscapes in a realist fashion. They have re-energized notions of a

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western region and culture, and so I use this region to explore the new academic/public regionalism.

The American West as Region

Geography's West is perhaps the most concrete American region one might discern on the U.S. map using the old "areal differentiation" approach. The West is that part of the country marked by a dry climate and mountainous terrain, where mining, logging, and grazing dominated the economy, and where extensive public lands produced land tenure patterns sharply different from the East. Yes, we have trouble deciding whether California, or the other coastal states, are part of the West, and some parts of the arid West are actually quite wet—the mountains for example—but the West, at one time or another in its history, may just have given geographers much of what they craved in defining honest-to-goodness geographical regions with relatively sharp and defensible boundaries.

Maybe, then, the emergence of a modern, exurban, information and services economy—the "New West"—represents the final dissolution of geographical region. Suburban sprawl and improved transportation and information systems increasingly make the West just like the rest. I suspect, however, that the weaknesses of geographic regionalization are more fundamental and prevailed in the past as they do now. Geographers and historians discover the fruitlessness of geographical boundary-setting each time they succumb to the seemingly simple, necessary, logic of defining the West as geographical space. Such efforts seem strained, arbitrary, or just wasted energy, though scholars still try, most recently, David Emmons (1994). Maybe Emmons was being ironic when he wrote that "Among the predictable and *happy* consequences of the so-called New Western History has been a renewed interest in determining western borders" (emphasis mine). I cannot see how geographical borders fit into his argument about the geographically and culturally shifting roots of "a distinctly western culture" (1994, 437).

Historians Cronon, Miles, and Gitlin, in an essay about how the West-as-frontier evolved into the West-as-region (a common theme in western history), simply decided to define neither. They concluded that: "Despite what some scholars seem to believe, it is no easier to define a region than a frontier, and we have no interest in pursuing what long ago became a sterile debate about the relative merits of frontier versus regional history" (Cronan, Miles, and Gitlin 1992, 23). The most successful western analysts, I believe, simply forego the boundary problem, leaving it implicit. Lavender, in his classic (though now dated) *The*

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Southwest, included two maps but did not define the Southwest explicitly–rather the reader is left to assume that places or events not described in the book must not be Southwestern! (Cronon and his co-authors include *no* maps, like so many histories.) Still, many western historians mix geography and history in a frustrating (for a geographer) re-hash of old-style regional geography.

The Region as Identity

Given this intuitive regionalism, the lay notion of the West, as both unique region and cultural wellspring, seems as reluctant to die as the West-as-frontier. Yes, the postmodern world would seem to present "strong forces" for geographical de-regionalization—mostly economic but also political and social. Arrayed against them are cultural prerogatives for regional continuity—forces that might appear at first to be "weak forces," like myths and imagery and sense of place and group identity—weak according to dispassionate geographical analysis and received American wisdom about melting pots, yet holding their own and strengthening in the New West.

Western sense of region and place is (and was) based on exceptionalism: the West as frontier, arid, sparsely populated, with a physical landscape like no other American place. But with many western historians rejecting exceptionalist arguments, especially those rooted in the region's physical geography, frontier conditions, or commodity economy, no well-informed geographer dared revert to the old-style regional approach either. Yet, many western observers cannot shake a regional determinism. They expect and/or hope that human affairs (labor movements, race relations, family dynamics, community building, and regional development) will play out differently in the West than elsewhere because of the grand setting—Wallace Stegner's "geography of hope" (1980).

Regions exist, and are even reborn, in a post-structuralist world because enough people want them. Consider the new western writers, who sit on the cusps of a dilemma—they mostly want to tell us that life in the West is like life anywhere else—husbands hurt wives, community flourishes or dematerializes, children grow up or die tragically. A large part of their project is to de-exceptionalize, and thus de-regionalize, the West. But, at least at this moment in American publishing annals, they need to maintain a western cachet because their stories gain freshness via western place and landscape. The much-told story about an editor rejecting Norman MacLean's (1976) *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories* because "these stories have trees in them," is now a publishers'

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landscape mantra: write your mysteries, family tragicomedies, and even personal memoirs, just make sure they have trees, sandstone deserts, mountains, and open range in them!

The New West Sells!

Trade books with mountains and trees in them suggest a less uplifting reason why regional identity will remain strong and maybe even strengthen in the West: the place sells, and many New Westerners know it. The post-structural geography of capital and production described by Harvey enables the regional creation of place for market purposes. Harvey (1984, 284) argues that as capitalism becomes:

> increasingly sensitive to the spatially differentiated qualities of which the world's geography is composed, then it is possible for the peoples and powers that command those spaces to alter them in such a way as to be more rather than less attractive to highly mobile capital.

This from a geographer who played an important role in sinking the regional enterprise in academic geography.

Analysts of the post-modern economy are talking about *The End of Organized Capitalism* (Lash and Urry 1987) and regional restructuring of epic proportions (Soja 1989). They tend to harp on "de-industrialization" of the now "rust belts" and the industrialization of less developed regions and countries and pay less attention to the post-industrialization of regions, like the Rocky Mountains, that never industrialized in the first place. But in the regional restructuring described by Harvey and Soja, one can find the logic for the jump from the West's primary, commodity economy straight to the post-industrial information and services economy. Western commentators have coined an inappropriate, but effective, term for part of this economic change, referring to the rise of "industrial tourism." We get mega-ski resorts instead of open-pit copper mines; "authentic chuck-wagon dinners" that feed 1200 people per hour, instead of cattle drives; monster homes on view lots instead of sheltered homesteads; and whitewater-raft jams on the rivers instead of log jams.

The post-structuralists tell us that capitalism is now predominantly involved in the production of signs, images, and sign systems—a production that the West is so good at, so experienced with, that the new economy simply falls all over itself trying to invest in the region as a unique, emblematic, and marketable place. Global capitalism may be annihilating space and time, but it is also creating fertile seedbeds for the growth of "new" places with new advantages. Though they avoid

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post-structuralist phraseology, Montana sociologist Jobes (1993, 1988) and economist Power (1996) point out that many recent western immigrants do not follow jobs in the pattern of the old industrial economy. Rather, they move first to the place they want to live and then go about creating a job, a business, a system of production, often linked firmly to place and the western landscape through recreation and tourism. They then capture capital that flows through the region for old and new reasons: from fighting fires to fly fishing, from retirement to real estate tax shelters. They appreciate the system of images and myths energized by the new western writers and hyped by the news and money magazines: free advertising.

Power (1996) situates the new economy in community, and certainly the new economy has proven fertile in the creation of quite prosperous "communities," like Aspen, Vail, Sun Valley, and Jackson Hole, but his work is essentially about region, and—though he tries to make it universal—is also particularly about the West and its jump from primary to tertiary economy. The western communities he writes about are practicing what Harvey called "the active production of places with special qualities," and Power and others agree that the old standards of western regional exceptionalism—open space, monumental landscapes, vast public lands, surviving species, ethnicity, strong identity with the land, and a good story to tell (i.e., the old western history)—all nicely pre-adapt the region to capitalize on the newly disorganized capitalism.

The New Westerners (and their attitudes tend eventually to rub off onto the Old Westerners) get identity and money by making sure that the economic and demographic transition does not overwhelm western mythology and the existence of a uniquely western region. That, by any measure, is a hell of a good deal for contemporary regional geographers.

Environment and Society: Who's on First?

The rise of environmental concerns in the 1960s and 1970s helped fuel the resurgence of American geography in K-12 and university. Insight on environment and society relationships was suddenly in demand. But academic geography had a historical problem with the subject that kept it from contributing as much as it could have to environmental discourse. At the turn of the century, several geographers—Ellen Churchill Semple (1911), in particular—tried to explain culture and the development of nation-states in purely environmental terms—mostly using climate to explain everything from settlement form to "industriousness." This environmental determinism was wrapped up with racism and genetic determinism, and the rest is, as they say, history. Modern

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geographers still want rightly to distance themselves from this tradition, but this trepidation made them fail to step up to contribute as much as they might have when society started asking hard questions about how environment, and environmental change (like global warming), affected society. Geographers like Gilbert White (of natural hazards research fame) and others who started studying how climate change would affect everything from agriculture to cities, were accused of practicing a modern environmental determinism and of neglecting the power of culture and the political economy (which they did, to an extent).

In her recent review of geographical contributions to global change research (especially climate impact assessment), Liverman (1999), a leading practitioner, glossed over this problem, but rightly cited the solid work through which geographers are actively steering the U.S. and international global climate change research and policy agenda. Indeed, despite the first efforts to assess how climate change would affect society, more work is now focused on how people change nature, reflecting the long-standing yin and yang of this subfield, and the tensions between those who look to environment and those who look to society for explanation.

Nature (and) (or) (vs.) Society

Certainly among the most important questions facing humankind is, simply, what ought to be our relationship to non-human nature. Common discourse and lay arguments reveal many alternative views of that relationship. We feel dominated by nature when tornadoes level Midwestern towns, but also show our dominion through everything from air conditioning to genetic engineering. Most academics chose the middle road: nature and culture interact in complex ways. This shows up in lay discourse encapsulated, for example, in the refrain: Humans are part of ecosystems. Even this notion, however, can mask a simple anthropocentrism when people argue that human actions (e.g., putting cattle on the range) are thus "natural." This argument—in all its simplicity—emerges in many modern debates about land and resource use, especially in the western United States (it has also been invoked by talk-show host Rush Limbaugh).

Yet, the daily experience of most humans is one of natural exceptionalism: we seem so different and apart from nature that we hardly recognize any naturalistic elements of the human condition. In an essay appropriately titled *Part and Apart: Issues in Humankind's Relationship to the Natural World*, Kates (1983) suggested that our sense of separateness came early, as humans learned to make tools, and was quickly rein-

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forced by religious dogma. In attempting to lay out the history of human environmental perception, Lowenthal (1990) argues that notions that we were a bad influence on nature did not appear until quite recently.

Modern environmentalism is based on a merger of these two views: we are exceptional, and we are damaging. Furthermore, human-induced degradation is different from other types of environmental changes (e.g., asteroids causing extinction) because we are conscious of our impacts and can choose not to degrade nature. The prescription: we must re-submit to the dictates (i.e., the limits) of nature in everything we do, from agriculture to flood control.

But scholars of nature and society relationships have something else to say. The most searching assessment of these debates through history unfortunately stops at 1800. Nevertheless, Glacken's (1967) classic book, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, brings a huge body of scholarship to bear on how people and nature have interacted, mostly through implication from what people thought (and wrote) about nature over time. Glacken poses three great questions in western thought about our relationship to the habitable Earth: (1) Was Earth purposefully made for human inhabitation? (2) Have Earth's physical qualities influenced and molded human culture and character? and (3) How have people, in their long tenure on Earth, "changed it from its hypothetical pristine condition"? All three questions are still necessary in any discussions about the nature/society nexus, but the last bears most attention here. About a third of his 763-page, benchmark book shows how the question of human impact has been posed and answered. The most striking character of this millennial inquiry has been the tendency through history for people to see practically all human transformation of ecosystems as positive (or, at least, to explain the most odious changes as temporary or caused by annoyed deities or nature's own perversities).

Lowenthal's (1990) equally sweeping (but considerably shorter) treatise extends a Glacken-like analysis to the present; he agrees that our exceptionalist self-image is long-standing, even fundamental to humanness, but concludes, surprisingly (to me at least), that across the thousands of years that we modified the natural world to our uses (clearing forests, domesticating plants and animals, and creating new materials), it only dawned on us in the late-1800s that these transformations might not all be good. Lowenthal attributes this to Marsh's (1864) book, *Man and Nature*, and to Marsh's scathing critique of late-19th-century-Vermont landscape degradation. Stewart Udall labels *Man and Nature*, simply, "the beginning of wisdom" in a thus-titled chapter devoted to Marsh's work in Udall's own 1963 classic, *The Quiet Crisis*.

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This chink in the armor of self-satisfaction widened with the turn of the century as the progressive conservationists pounced on wasteful land and water uses and called for scientific and rational principles of resource management. The conservation movement gained popular support in large measure through images of squandered resources in the West (bison carcasses to the horizon and the wounds of placer mining in California) brought to the eastern intelligentsia via magazines like *Harpers*. Beginning in the 1890s, Congress considered hundreds of bills to protect forests, reduce floods and soil erosion, and protect wildlife. To some observers, this is the epochal change that laid the groundwork for modern American environmentalism. Others point out that it took the terrible waste of the 1934-36 Dust Bowl debacle to truly establish environmental conservation as a going concern in America, and my own work suggests that the specter of the Dust Bowl still affects our thinking about American agricultural sustainability (Riebsame 1986, 1991a and b, 1994).

Yet, even the most vaunted cases of human-induced degradation did not convince everyone, and we are not immune to anti-environmental revisionism. The 1930s Dust Bowl droughts appeared to be the first, obvious, human-induced, ecological disaster in the New World (Worster 1992). But, the Dust Bowl, and long-term sustainability of the Great Plains, is a wonderful case of confusion and sloppy thinking about the human role in ecosystems: creation on the Plains of the world's most productive grain region is seen either as a triumph of technological adaptation and innovation, or an obvious case of unsuitable development just waiting to be pushed over the edge into another, perhaps this time permanent, ecological disaster (this view most outrageously made by Deborah and Frank Popper (1987), a geographer and a planner from Rutgers University, in their so-called "buffalo commons" prescription).

My own take on this has been (Riebsame 1991 a and b):

1. To marvel that we could use a region for over a century in a particular way and still be divided over the sustainability of that use.

2. That the system is sustainable only with large outside subsidies of finance, risk capital, pork, and energy—and that these subsidies are likely to run out before the ecological draw-down causes crisis.

3. That its apparent sustainability is conditional and temporary in some longer time frame.

Perhaps my first response is the most important for our current debates about sustainability and continuing uncertainty about the basic nature of the human/nature relationship. It suggests that we may not be able to, as often assumed, even identify unambiguous cases of unsustainability! Furthermore, I can attest firsthand that Great Plains folks

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take great umbrage at any criticism of their noble efforts to create a great agricultural region out of a semi-arid grassland. How on earth, they argue, can anyone think that Plains farming is unsustainable? Look at the blood, sweat, tears, and money they have poured into their farms, look at their good wheat crop this year (never mind last year's drought), and do not forget the hardships overcome to make this place productive! Why do you refuse to see that they have succeeded in what Rene Dubos called "the wooing of Earth"? Faith in technology and an abiding belief that humans can and must make ecosystems more productive simply ooze out of Plains folk, Rocky Mountain ranchers, and a host of others who extract resources.

Current Nature and Society Work

Today no academics see culture as determined mostly by nature, so two main thrusts appear in nature and society analysis: (1) the *human transformation* of Earth and its ecosystems (the early leader in this work, Carl Sauer, called this the creation of the "cultural landscape"), and (2) a constellation of ecologically informed social science sub-disciplines often labeled either "human ecology" or "cultural ecology," the practitioners of which try to study the *interaction of people and nature* rather than getting stuck in one-way models of people affecting nature or nature affecting people.

The Transformation of Earth

Humans have perturbed ecosystems since they learned to manipulate their surroundings, but most contemporary efforts to examine the scale and quality of human-induced environmental change focus on the past 300 years or so, as human population and technology burgeoned and the net human effect became global in scope (Turner, et al. 1991). Transformation studies have the pleasure of completely side-stepping the old environmental determinism because they are almost all pure cultural or social determinism.

Analysts try to unravel the human signal in everything from range vegetation to global climate—an implicit posture that humans are an exceptional and external element apart from nature and are degrading or, at least, changing ecosystems from their natural state. Results of this work indicate that humans have altered the structures and processes of natural systems at all scales, from local wetlands to the oceans and even global climate. The tacit message is that human perturbation is bad, and that non-human nature (if one can find it) provides a model or bench-

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mark of what is right or proper–for everything from the acidity of rainfall to average global surface temperature (Glacken's "hypothetical pristine Earth"). This notion is strong within ecological research, which tends to focus on undisturbed sites and where the human signal is considered as a confounding factor laid over the natural processes to be studied.

The human transformation of ecosystems, according to social scientists, is driven by a set of universal factors: human population growth, the growth of affluence and consumption, technological innovation, intensifying and expanding agricultural, urban, and industrial land use, and attitudes and values in which natural systems are seen as the equivalent of factories producing commodities for human consumption. These processes are at the heart of an effort to study the human dimensions (HD) of global change (Liverman 1999). The logic for HD studies is simple: most contemporary environmental problems derive from human behavior, and natural science analysis is thus insufficient to understand, or to predict, environmental change. The HD research community, with a large cohort of geographers, has identified two broad areas for analysis: industrial metabolism and land use change (Stern, Young, and Druckman 1992). Industrial metabolism focuses on production/consumption systems that result in environmental changes like increased atmospheric CO_2 or toxic chemicals in the biosphere. Land use studies seek better understanding of driving forces, patterns, and ecological and social effects of land use and land cover changes like deforestation and the spread of human settlement.

Because it was evoked chiefly by concerns over global warming, ozone depletion, and species extinction (the big three global changes), human dimensions research reifies global-scale thinking. But, many geographers and other social analysts argue that resource, land use, and ecosystem management are better understood as local and regional social processes. They argue that analysis must be appropriately scaled to social features: environmental perception and decision-making by individuals and institutions, land tenure and land use customs and laws of regions, cultures, and the insinuation of capitalist forms of production and trade into local economies and politics. So, there is still a scale unconformity in our explanations.

The Interaction of People and Environment

Practitioners of the academic "social ecology" disciplines claim to recognize, and to analyze, the interaction of people and ecosystems (Porter 1980). The central question becomes: Why do people do what

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they do to the environment? The answers tend to fall into two broad causal classes: culture and behavior, and institutions and policy.

Culture and Behavior. Researchers who study the social traditions people bring to their interactions with ecosystems, their patterned behavior and institutions, their values, and how they perceive the environment call themselves human ecologists or cultural ecologists, sometimes assuming a differentiation between focus on the individual (the former) and the collective (the latter). Most cultural/human ecologists apply an adaptation model: people adapt socially to nature in ways similar to how organisms adapt physically. The adaptations are cultural and behavioral and are affected by attitudes about and perceptions of environment. Because perceptions can be flawed, much maladaption seems to persist (Whyte 1987). While the notion of environmental perception is often treated simply as attitudes about environment by policy makers wanting to know how people might respond to an environmental issue, human ecologists operate on a more complex model. They see perception as a social and cognitive process of information filtering and interpretation that eventually yields "images in people's heads" of the environment, images that guide their actions (Aitken, Cutter, and Sell 1989).

Perception researchers tend to stress how people misperceive nature: research has shown that people have difficulty defining what is natural and tend to perceive many natural processes, like fire, pest outbreaks, wildlife winter-kill, and predation as bad. This perception produces pressure for controlling ecosystem processes—control that often gets us in trouble (e.g., wildlife winter/emergency feeding programs, or fire supression). People also have difficulty perceiving slow, cumulative change, and tend uncritically to accept the current landscape as the basis for natural, correct, or desired landscape. According to an extensive body of psychological research, people cannot readily understand the behavior of complex systems and cannot intuitively grasp multiple-scale interactions (the classic paper on this is by Tversky and Kahneman 1974). One despairs that we can ever communicate ecological complexity to people!

Institutions and Policy. Social scientists think of institutions in two main ways: as formal organizations and bureaucracies like the U.S. Forest Service or National Park Service, and as cultural features like landownership structures and types of economy. Countless histories of natural resource institutions of the first kind reveal the shifting ideas and historical contexts that shaped their modern structure but tend to gloss over their purposeful social and political construction, neglecting, for example, the use of control over land to dominate or exclude social groups or to validate scientific theories of the day.

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In a sense, institutions have "perceptions" too, especially when they institutionalize scientific concepts—creating an internal inertia while external science may move on to new ways of looking at the world. The debate over range condition in the American West illustrates this institutional lag. Traditional notions of vegetation succession are replaced with more complex ideas of multiple-steady-states, with some analysts arguing that the old system of rating range condition (good, poor, fair, etc.) not only poorly reflects range ecosystem dynamics, but also causes unnecessary conflict among range interests (Committee on Rangeland Classification 1994).

The second type of institution—less formal social features that guide individual behavior—increasingly figures in what has come to be called political ecology, the study of how the political economy affects the natural ecology (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987; Emel and Peet 1989). The political ecologists allow that different perceptions, attitudes, and values affect human interaction with ecosystem but argue that structural factors, such as differential access to resources, control of capital, land ownership and division practices, and other aspects of "social order," are more important determinants than individual preference and behavior. The first strains of political ecology were Marxist, or had strong Marxist overtones (e.g., Worster's critique of agricultural development of the U.S. Great Plains previously mentioned), and these threads are still part of the sub-discipline, but the focus was enlarged as themes not linked to Marxist political theory surfaced (e.g. feminism, consumerism, ethnic pluralism, and others). Still, the traditional Marxist themes endure for good reason: land tenure, access to the means of producing resources, and relationships among land owners, tenants, and capital play a critical role in all land-based societies—no less so in the western United States than, say, Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa. In such places, political ecologists have been able to demonstrate quite convincingly that colonial and post-colonial changes in agriculture and access to land made many people especially vulnerable to disruption. According to Watts (1983), the Sahelian drought did not cause famine; rather, weakened social structures caused famine. In the Amazon, political ecologists have traced the complex relationships among peasant behavior, class, state politics, land tenure, and international aid and capital and have shown how they conspire to cause tropical deforestation and cultural degradation. The evidence seems to prove rather easily the point that political and economic structures—conceived in purely social terms and metaphors, not in organic analogies—must be considered in explaining any environmental problem (Hecht and Cockburn 1989).

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Looking at Nature and Seeing Ourselves

This brief literature review hardly scratched the surface of relevant material but does suggest what we have learned from human and cultural ecologists in geography and other fields. First, we have better defined the net human transformation of nature, though its good and bad qualities remain debatable. Indeed, this remains the big question: are humans so tough on nature that they need to change their ways profoundly, and, if so, what model do we have for proper environment/society relationships? The notion of sustainable development has emerged to suggest that we can have human development and nature too. Others point to traditional societies, most famously the American Indian, as having the correct relationship to nature. Both ideas are problematic. Sustainable development appeals to interests who support quo: more development. The primitive myth does not stand up to scrutiny. Denevan (1992) argued that Native Americans not only degraded natural ecosystems but also were poised to have an even larger impact through population growth on the eve of European arrival. His argument was covered in national news and earned him a lot of criticism from those who revere North American pre-industrial societies. As usual, the debate tells us more about us than about nature and our relationship to it.

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Implications of New Research and Scholarship in History and Geography for Inservice Teacher Professional Development

By Ruth O. Selig

Abstract

This paper highlights the important role SSEC has chosen to play in its dual dedication to understanding new research in the social sciences and educational practice and in translating that new knowledge into what teachers understand and teach to pre-college students. The paper summarizes discussion at the 1999 SSEC Conference's inservice education focus group on the importance of bringing both interdisciplinary knowledge from the social science disciplines and "best practices" models of exemplary inservice professional development to the education community, particularly teachers. Discussion included specific initiatives that might be taken to enhance inservice education and a discussion of the possible impact of the "standards" debate. Because the conference itself was modeled on the SSEC teacher institutes, the paper utilizes it and the 1993-94 SSEC teacher institute on the American West to gain insight into exemplary inservice professional development. In particular, the paper focuses on the winning combination of in-depth research-based presentations, community-based field resources, and small group participatory discussions focused on teaching strategies. A short discussion of the Smithsonian Institution's teacher-training efforts in anthropology is included to reinforce the author's own endorsement for the SSEC commitment to combining research, community resources, and teaching strategies as the foundation for exemplary inservice professional development for teachers.

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Keywords: inservice training, social science education, history, geography, anthropology

The 1999 Annual Conference: A Model for Inservice Teacher Education

The Social Science Education Consortium (SSEC) is dedicated to furthering the dissemination of new research in the social sciences and in educational practice, and in translating that new knowledge into content and methods for teachers and their students. One of the unspoken assumptions of all SSEC endeavors and activities is that as knowledge changes, teachers both want and need to keep up-to-date and informed of the latest thinking in their teaching fields. The 1999 SSEC Annual Conference focused on new frontiers in history and geography as viewed in the context of new research about the American West. In the process, the conference helped clarify the important and ongoing relationship between social science research and applied educational practice.

The inclusion of in-depth research-based lectures, field experiences, and small and large-group discussions focused on carefully chosen topics proved to be a very effective model for SSEC members. SSEC staff experience in building exemplary teacher education institutes helped them to combine substantive content, community resources, and discussions—an effective mix used in SSEC teacher institutes.

Content: New Frontiers in Geography and History

Focusing on the American West allowed SSEC to bring to teachers and SSEC members some of the most important cutting edge research in the fields of history and geography. New ideas in geography were presented through field experiences conducted by William Riebsame of the Department of Geography at the University of Colorado. In his field narration, formal comments, and conference paper (a version of which appears in this volume), Riebsame explained that in the 1970s, geographers believed that regions actually existed as geographic phenomena and that such regions, for example, the Southwest, "... could be mapped and described and that their essential attributes could be discovered through spatial statistics" (Riebsame 1999a, 1). As with so many academic disciplines, postmodernism influenced geography in profound ways, so that today geographers think that regions are "...constructed by people's minds, and understanding of things social, from the outside

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and from the inside..." Under the new notion of regionalism, "people annihilate, redefine, and reconstruct regions and places for many reasons, from federal budget battles to the gender wars" (Riebsame 1999a, 1).

In addition to new notions of regions, Riebsame introduced participants to the notion of "geographic edges: urban-rural; private-public; mountains-plains; settled-wild," and to the intersections of social and physical landscapes (Riebsame 1999b, 1). This explication came not through lecture but by traveling through these boundaries to view the various intersections that Riebsame was describing. Land use and planning were presented in the context of Boulder and Rocky Mountain National Park, a good example of using community resources effectively.

New developments in history were introduced by Elliott West, the noted western historian from the University of Arkansas. In recent years, the new scholarship in history, evidenced in new methods, topics, and conceptual frameworks, has affected western history so profoundly that many now speak of "the new western history." As Elliott West noted several years ago, "The prevailing view of the western past has changed more in the last ten years than it did in the previous ninety" (West 1990, 72).

The social, political, and economic ferment of the 1960s left a profound impact on the teaching of history, and the history of the western part of the United States has been no exception. By the 1990s, history, once a chronology of political and economic events and elites, began to include treatment of the everyday lives of ordinary people, women's experiences, contributions of ethnic and minority groups, and cultures previously ignored, such as pre-Columbian Native American societies or West African cultures ravaged by the slave trade. Earlier emphases on immigration into the West and assimilation into Anglo-Saxon-dominated American culture gave way, instead, to a richer and more complex understanding of various peoples mixing and mingling throughout the country, including the earliest Native American settlers. In addition, historians sought to understand the West as a distinct region, even while, as Riebsame made clear, geographers were questioning the whole notion of regions.

The SSEC Annual Conference made it clear that there is much new western history and geography that teachers should incorporate into their own curriculum. Elliott West provided an example by outlining the confluence of cultural and ethnic themes in telling the stories of the diverse groups of people that shaped the West. He argued that this region has been the most diverse part of the country except for the period from 1890 to 1920, when immigration to the eastern region made it

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more heterogeneous. West made clear the importance of the connections between westerners and their environment (and between history and geography as disciplines), especially in recent decades, and the importance of people's connections to their own past. He drew a distinction between "infinite games," such as those reflected in the lives of families and institutions over generations, the stuff of history, and "finite games," characterized by the limited goals and processes of day-to-day life. Much of West's message could be used effectively by teachers of American studies, geography, American history, or literature. Western history presents a treasure for teachers when they have both the content and practical strategies for integrating that new content into their own curriculum.

Resources: Best Practices in Staff Development Institutes

SSEC has had years of experience developing inservice teacher education institutes, and that experience is well worth borrowing. In a recent SSEC publication, *Service Learning in the Middle School Curriculum: Staff Development Handbook*, the authors make clear that the SSEC inservice teacher institutes were developed with "vigilant attention paid to best practices in staff development [that succeeded in] providing for positive learning experiences and sustained service-enhanced curriculum and instruction" (Schukar and Singleton 1999, 1). The book focuses on "...preparing, designing, and leading staff development training inservice learning" rather than on service learning itself, and thus is useful as a summary of the development of teacher education institutes on many different subjects (Schukar and Singleton 1999, 3). The first section, "Our General Approach to Training," provides the would-be trainer with an overview of the educative process and reviews the many details involved in preparing, designing, and leading staff development institutes. The Handbook stresses establishing goals, learning about participants, using a variety of training methods and structures, involving the participants as "teachers as well as learners," offering plenty of time for participants to develop their own strategies and curriculum plans, and planning effective institute evaluation.

NEH Institute as Model for Inservice Professional Development

SSEC's proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), which funded three teacher inservice institutes in 1993-95, made clear why new research in the history of the American West is impor-

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tant information for teachers, and what theory and assumptions lay beneath the approach SSEC took to develop "The American West: An Institute for Secondary History and Literature Teachers." The institute's goals included both academic and instructional objectives, reflecting SSEC's dual mission. The goals were:

1. To increase participants' knowledge of the history, literature, art and iconography, mythology, and environments of the American West, focusing primarily on the 19th century.

2. To demonstrate how the perspectives and methods of the humanities provide deep understanding of any historical period or topic—one equally applicable to other regions and time periods.

3. To provide participants with opportunities to learn and practice research and analytical skills in historical archives and museums, using print, artifactual, and visual sources, and to present the materials through lectures, demonstrations, and textual analysis.

4. To provide participants with opportunities to learn and practice skills of curriculum planning and development (using primary sources discovered in their archival research) and to explore innovative instructional methods).

5. To help participants plan and conduct follow-up inservice workshops for their school-district colleagues based on the institute (see Holthaus and Giese 1992, iii, 2).

The combination of academic content with a focus on pedagogy was also reflected in the staffing of the institute: a senior historian, Elliott West; five guest lecturers from various university departments; two master teachers with long experience teaching students and teachers; and the project co-directors, Jim Giese, then executive director of SSEC and a Ph.D. in history with long experience in teaching, curriculum development, and teacher training, and Gary Holthaus, then a director of the Center of the American West at the University of Colorado at Boulder and a highly regarded poet.

The balance between social science content and effective, best-practices pedagogy was also reflected in the institute schedule, which featured sessions focused on content, teaching strategies, and resources. The four-week institute included 23 hour-long, in-depth sessions presented by leading specialists in the field. For each, teacher-participants were expected to have read material recommended for background and follow-up application. Complementary discussions about the readings were led by the scholars, while the two master teachers led sessions focusing on curriculum development, team planning, classroom strategies, and the integration of new content into the teachers' classes.

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The third institute element proved to be perhaps the most unusual. It focused on community resources, a critical element for both the institute and for the 1999 SSEC Annual Conference. The directors of the institute encouraged the teachers to have their students use archival, library, and museum resources by enabling teachers to meet with historians and staff from various institutions and to do independent research themselves. The teachers visited the Denver Public Library's Western History Collection, the Denver Art Museum, Bent's Fort, the National Archives Regional Office, the Leadville Living History Site, and the Denver Museum of Natural History. In the San Luis Valley, teachers learned about the variety of culture groups that lived there over time and how each group interacted with the environment.

The grant proposal explained the value of the unique combination of content, resources, and teaching strategies:

> The plenary sessions will be designed to add to the teachers' knowledge through lectures that will complement assigned readings and serve as springboards for the research and field experiences...Faculty members will conduct discussion sessions every week and will sometimes participate in panel discussions designed to facilitate synthesis of institute content (Holthaus and Giese 1992, 12).

The discussions and afternoon workshop sessions were described as:

> ...devoted to issues related to curriculum and will be conducted by the master teachers and project directors. One result of the curriculum sessions will be the production of materials for use with the teachers' own students. The teachers will be expected to develop teaching units and lesson plans sufficient for several weeks of instruction. These teacher-produced materials will be shared among all institute participants and will serve as the basis of a curriculum publication we propose to produce (Holthaus and Giese 1992, 13).

The importance of the field experiences and use of community resources was reflected in the statement, "participants will engage in primary source research in western history and literature...each participant will be expected to delve into these resources and use them in preparing curriculum units and lesson plans" (Holthaus and Giese 1992, 13). The proposal continued to describe field experiences as providing participant teachers with community-based opportunities to explore institute themes.

> Through these experiences, institute faculty and staff will model teaching approaches that the participants will be able to use with their own students....Among the long-term out-

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comes we hope to achieve through the institute are developing partnerships between teachers and local and regional historical societies and museums and encouraging participants to involve their students directly with local humanities resources" (Holthaus and Giese 1992, 14).

After participants completed the institute, they were required to plan and conduct their own inservice sessions with their colleagues, thus multiplying the impact of the program many times over.

The Smithsonian Institution's Anthropology for Teachers Program

From 1978 to 1986, the author directed or co-directed five yearlong Smithsonian Institution teacher education programs. The first four were in cooperation with George Washington University and funded by the National Science Foundation; the fifth was in cooperation with the University of Wyoming and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities/Wyoming Council for the Humanities. These programs, described at length elsewhere (Selig 1986, 1995, 1997, 1998), employed the same three elements that SSEC has used: in-depth research-based presentations and readings; wide use of community resources both to model best practices uses of such resources and to present new knowledge and information; and small group discussions that highlight teaching strategies to incorporate new knowledge and methods into the classroom. The Anthropology for Teachers Program, both in Washington, D.C., and Wyoming, had four major objectives: to give teachers a firm foundation in anthropology; to help teachers integrate the subject into their teaching; to help teachers better use their communities' resources for the teaching of anthropology; and to create a network of teachers, anthropologists, and museum educators interested in encouraging more precollege anthropology (Selig 1998).

To achieve these objectives, 75 teachers from three Washington, D.C., area school systems enrolled in a two-semester course specifically created for teachers. Meeting in three separate sections at a central school location, this course focused on eight monthly topics useful for teaching history, geography, world studies, biology, and earth science. Over the years, topics included primates; early human development; Native Americans; New and Old World civilizations; archaeology and ecology; health, healing, and religion; and socialization in non-western cultures. Each topic was the subject of research-based lectures, experiential teaching activities, presentations by and discussion with a university professor or museum curator at an area resource, and finally a

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participatory discussion focusing on teacher-developed curriculum units that they had incorporated into their classrooms.

When the program ended, its newsletter was expanded to create the widely read Smithsonian serial publication, *AnthroNotes*, which includes research-based articles, guides to community and other resources, and teaching activities. The best of the program materials along with new activities and articles developed for *AnthroNotes* were incorporated into a teachers' packet. Twenty-nine of the *AnthroNotes* essays were recently compiled into a Smithsonian Institution Press publication, *Anthropology Explored, the Best of Smithsonian AnthroNotes* (Selig and London 1998), which serves as an introductory reader to the field of anthropology.[1] The combination of research, community resources, and teaching strategies lies at the core of this work in anthropology teacher training and outreach. It is not surprising, therefore, that this author is enthusiastic about the long and distinguished record of the SSEC teacher institutes based on a combination of research, resources, and teaching strategies.

Inservice Professional Development Discussion Group

A conference break-out group on inservice training discussed at length the importance of bringing both interdisciplinary knowledge from the social sciences and best practices models of professional development to the attention of practicing teachers. Because the Annual Conference used the teacher-institute model developed by SSEC discussed above, the conference itself served as a good example of how teacher development should be conducted.

The SSEC Conference brought educators and social scientists together to learn how historians, geographers, economists, anthropologists, and other social scientists gain new knowledge, broaden their perspectives, unearth new sources for research, ask new questions, and look at old questions within new contexts. Much of the discussion revolved around the continuing importance of the SSEC's dual dedication to scholarship and academic depth, and the translation of that scholarship into the context of educational settings. For the most part, the SSEC

1. To place your name on the *AnthroNotes* mailing list or to request a teacher's packet (both free-of-charge), write to Anthropology Outreach Office, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560-0112 or email: Kaupp.ann@nmnh.si.edu. *AnthroNotes* is also available at www.nmnh.si.edu/departments/anthro.html. *Anthropology Explored: The Best of Smithsonian AnthroNotes* is available from the Smithsonian Institution Press (1-800-782-4612).

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staff is focused on the translation of academic knowledge to broader education constituencies through their teacher institutes, publications, and curriculum development projects. On the other hand, SSEC members are focused more on research and scholarship, both in the social sciences and in the theory and practice of education.

Fortunately, both members and staff participated in the "inservice training" discussion group, and by the end of the session, it was clear that general consensus regarding the importance and value of both aspects of SSEC's mission had been reached. Discussion participants wondered how SSEC might best bring its research findings and their applications to teachers. Several initiatives, some already underway, were agreed upon:

1. Develop and describe, through publications, models of effective inservice teacher education.

2. Revisit (by means of a publication, a conference, or a round-up) how historians, geographers, and other social science professionals gain new knowledge and perspectives.

3. Search for new ways to convey to teachers new or changing concepts in the social sciences and history.

4. Create partnerships and develop initiatives and projects with other professional social science or educational organizations.

5. Explore ways to serve charter schools, state teacher organizations, and home schooling organizations.

6. Create disciplinary subcommittees that review developments in each field and then write short articles for the SSEC newsletter or some other SSEC publication to help readers remain up-to-date.

In the break-out discussion on inservice professional development, there also was a lengthy discussion about the issue of national curriculum standards and the impact, opportunity, and obstacles the standards movement represents. Several questions were raised:

1. Can or should standards be integrated into the best practices approach of SSEC teacher-training institutes? Do the standards developed in history and other social sciences include cutting-edge research?

2. Should SSEC take a role in examining and disseminating information about the impact of standards and assessment, state by state?

3. How can SSEC assist teachers or influence inservice teacher education given the uneven geographical impact of the standards and teachers' generally negative reaction to them?

Although these three questions were not answered definitively, there was general consensus that because many other organizations were involved in the standards debate, and because several groups were exam-

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ining the impact of the national standards at the state level, SSEC should concentrate its energies elsewhere.

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Implications of New Research and Scholarship in Geography for K-12 Curriculum Development

By Mary E. Haas

Abstract

Curriculum development in social science is a dynamic process requiring analysis and synthesis of current trends in schools, the lives of students, societal needs, and knowledge in and of the social science disciplines. Making a curriculum meaningful for students who will live in the 21st century is a formidable task. The process of selecting appropriate curricular content must consider the academic standards prepared by disciplinary groups. The standards chosen must promote student learning and offer students opportunities to apply the content across school subjects, and in their work and leisure time in the larger society. Disciplinary ideas also change over time. Teachers need to emphasize understanding concepts and theories and their applications as important learning outcomes. School curriculum and social sciences must present important conceptual knowledge for future use by all citizens. Sound, accurate, and current content from the social sciences must be introduced. Returning to an atmosphere of cooperation between the discipline specialists and educators similar to that promoted by the reforms of the 1950s-60s is imperative to improve geography and social studies curriculum.

Key Words: curriculum, standards, integration, application, geography

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A Vision of Geography

Three essential elements of curriculum are: the nature of society, the nature of knowledge or the discipline, and the nature of the learners. As we enter the 21st century, both our national society and the global society are changing to become more interdependent. Likewise, the traditional social science disciplines, particularly geography, are changing as each seeks to explain its portion of the rapidly changing, increasingly interrelated world. A portion of the 1999 Social Science Education Consortium (SSEC) Annual Conference held in Boulder, Colorado, focused on this idea and others in the context of a discussion on the implications of new research and scholarship in geography for K-12 curriculum development.

In examining the nature of geography for the development of the social studies curriculum, the national geography standards, *Geography for Life* (Geography Education Standards Project 1994), are a good place to begin. The chapter in this monograph on changes in geographic thinking presented at the Annual Conference by William E. Riebsame, professor of geography at the University of Colorado at Boulder, is another good source. The national geography standards clearly define geography and expand it well beyond what many textbooks and teachers recognize as its boundaries. Riebsame explains how the meanings of important geographic concepts evolve and change, causing even those persons with a strong background in geography content to renew and rethink their knowledge of the field.

Traditionally, teachers and texts have tended to define geography as location, pointing to or marking places on a map, and place description, describing landmarks, general population characteristics, and natural resources at locations and within regions. Such an approach reinforces the idea that geography is minimally important to the lives of citizens and that it is unchanging in nature. This has resulted in geography's being relegated to the lower grades, where the only intellectual skill required was that of recalling specific facts. The interaction between natural and human-constructed environments was examined only from the perspective of the effective exploitation or control of natural resources to increase economic well being or the standard of living. This viewpoint made humans the dominant feature of places and assigned importance to a place only if and when it satisfied individual human or societal needs.

The National Geography Standards, *Geography for Life* (Geography Education Standards Project 1994), enlarge the vision of geography by stressing its dynamic nature and the interactions that occur both within and between places. Physical and human systems are identified as equally important and are described as continuously shaping the world

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in a variety of ways. Human modification of the environment is not always portrayed as lasting and beneficial, and the interaction between the physical and human environment is not always seen as adversarial. Geography is described as a practical subject whose tools, information, questions, and perspectives are used by many individuals and groups to examine problems in everyday life.

Riebsame's paper suggests that geographers continually acquire additional information and revise their ideas and definitions concerning their discipline. They often deal with conflicting information and realize the necessity of approaching their studies from multiple perspectives to better solve society's problems. Geographers know that finding the answers to questions posed in a new way may require the use of new types of data or challenge the quality of some data sources. Modern geographers use knowledge from other academic disciplines to provide new meaning and to raise new questions. They make recommendations to individuals and groups who want to know both the good and bad consequences of their decisions. Geographers recognize that they cannot know the entire truth, but they believe they have an important perspective and that they interpret information in ways that may help others make more rational decisions concerning how to live and interact in a dynamic world that cannot be completely controlled. Geographers are motivated to continue to learn about the world to improve decision making. Thus, geographers have a long-term goal similar to social studies educators (and scholars from all other disciplines that contribute to the knowledge base of social studies). It is interesting that as West, a historian, and Riebsame, a geographer, talked about their studies before the members of the SSEC, they found much in each other's perspectives and knowledge to help them better explain their own thoughts to individuals who were not experts on the West.

Curriculum Development and Revision

In the process of curriculum development, after determining the learning goals, curriculum writers must determine the best sequence to teach concepts, generalizations, theories, skills, and explore how geographic context may influence attitudes and values. Establishing a curriculum usually takes several years. While engaged in this process, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the social science content areas are dynamic and change in response to societal change. Although we do not know for certain if the personal and psychological developmental processes of learners are changing, we do know that the experiences and knowledge students bring to the curriculum are changing. Therefore, no

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curriculum can be expected to remain effective without considering the changes that influence its effectiveness. Unfortunately, the slow process of implementing changes in textbooks (which dominate many social studies classrooms) and the failure of the social studies community to accept new visions of the social studies curriculum have not encouraged the process of ongoing curriculum revision. This has resulted in the perpetuation of both erroneous content and poor pedagogical practices. Today, in spite of numerous efforts to reform geographic education, many students are still taught inaccurate content by instructional methods that do not reward them with a sense of accomplishment for learning something that is important and useful.

One misconception about geography education that remains entrenched and that hinders student learning is the belief that success in the subject requires the memorization of large amounts of content. Information learned in isolation does not encourage or prepare students to make connections or to solve real-life geographic problems. In general, while it is helpful to memorize some information that is used frequently and is relatively stable, much information can be gathered, used, and let go (Stiggins 1997). This is true for geography. When students are encouraged to solve problems, they seek necessary information, recognize its usefulness, and think about and reorganize the information to give it new meaning. Such behaviors promote reasoning and require the use of skills in acquiring and processing information. This places emphasis on a greater variety of learning tasks and calls for assessments in which students do more than recall or recognize answers (Scheurman and Newmann 1998). Students explain and construct information that illustrates their thoughts and conclusions. In problem solving, students also come to recognize the values and attitudes that influence the decisions they make. When geographic curricula emphasize the mastery of skills, reasoning ability, using values to make better choices, and pertinent geography content, the curriculum will be dynamic, richer, and more attuned to the discipline from which it draws.

Assessments and testing may then incorporate a variety of procedures appropriately matched to the tasks students perform as they learn. The characteristics of complete and correct answers will be specified, and students will practice applying such specifications to their work as they proceed through their learning tasks. Learning and teaching requires the integration of skills and content. Gathering, processing, and applying information must be a regular focus of the classroom. Content cannot be lists of facts to be memorized. Instead, curriculum must focus on big organizing concepts and statements of relationships, generalizations, and theories. Geographic concepts such as interdependence, culture, region, environment, place, and change are especially important

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because they are central to several disciplines that contribute to the knowledge base of social studies.

Clearly, the message is simple. Make sure young people work together and search out the best and most helpful information. This is not a new idea. The New Social Studies of the 1950s and 1960s, the most significant social studies developments in the last 50 years (Haas and Laughlin 1998), encouraged cooperation between social scientists and social studies educators.

With the world's population increasing and placing increased stress on Earth's human and natural resources, continuing present policies carries the risk of failures that cannot be tolerated. We must advocate curriculum and research on how individuals can learn, and better use, social studies knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Social studies is meaningful to the day-to-day lives of all people.

Questions for Future Curriculum Development

Some important questions that should be addressed as geography curriculum is appraised and redeveloped are:

1. How can advances in disciplinary content and learning theory be incorporated into the curriculum?

2. How can students become more engaged and motivated about achievement in geography/social studies?

3. How can all schools become places of continuous improvement in geography/social studies instruction across all grade levels? Throughout adult life?

4. How can the significant research about successful teaching strategies and curriculum achievements in geography and the social studies be implemented in curriculum?

5. How can K-12 teachers gain access to new information and local resources and opportunities to motivate and educate students about geography as well as other social science-related issues?

It is the mission of the SSEC to address topics such as these that emanate from curriculum questions in geography and the social studies.

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At Play With Curriculum Development in History

By John Allen Rossi

Abstract

This chapter reflects comments made during the group discussion about Elliott West's presentation "At Play with Education and History," at the Annual Conference of the Social Science Education Consortium in Boulder, Colorado. It explores the implications of West's themes for curriculum development in history and points out the obstacles to implementing the themes in the real world of schools and classrooms. It advocates organizing historical content around enduring patterns and essential questions, utilizing historical narrative, designing frameworks that integrate history and geography, connecting historical knowledge with the prior knowledge and experiences of learners, and using constructivist principles to design curriculum. Striking a cautionary note, the chapter examines the obstacles to implementing such a curriculum in light of state content standards, high stakes assessment, the belief systems of teachers, and new expectations created for teachers and students.

Key Words: curriculum development, history education, geography education, constructivism

In his chapter "At Play with Education and History," historian Elliott West warns that education is currently played as a finite game. As a finite game, education becomes a competitive enterprise whose energy is focused on short-term goals and decisive contests in which there are winners and losers. West believes that history is "far better played as an infinite game" in which goals are long term and the focus is on keeping the game going. His use of game terminology provides a useful lens to

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examine the state of K-12 history education in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. The proliferation of national and state standards in history and the social sciences, often connected to high stakes assessment, provides compelling evidence that education is indeed played as a finite game. At the same time, West's vision of history as an infinite game is supported by what professional educators know is best practice. The purposes of this chapter are to: (1) identify the themes from West's article that help to understand what is best practice in history education as an infinite game; (2) explore the implications of those themes for curriculum development in history; and (3) point out the obstacles to implementing the themes, particularly in an environment governed by the rules of the finite game.

Themes from History as an Infinite Game

There are four themes from West's vision of history as an infinite game that inform curriculum specialists and teachers as they design and implement a history curriculum. The first is the importance of organizing the study of history around big ideas and enduring patterns. According to Elliott West, these ideas and patterns give value to history because "they illuminate the human condition and suggest where we fit in." In his chapter, he identifies ideas such as migration, the connection between people and place, and cultural confluence as key ideas central to our understanding of the Old West. The entry into these patterns is often through an essential question that goes to the heart of the topic. For example, in examining the array of cultures during the 12th century in the place we call Colorado, West uses the question "how did [these cultures] mesh with one another?" This question is certainly an enduring one, equally relevant to 12th-century Colorado, New York City at the end of the 19th century, and Bosnia since the end of the Cold War.

In a second theme, West reminds us that history is socially constructed, reflecting "the breathtaking diversity of human perspective and values." He warns us of a more simplistic view, in which history is a set of conclusions about what "history teaches us." According to West, historical narrative reflects the cultural perspective and values of different groups. From the perspective of those who migrated from the south to the north, the region called "the West" might be called "the North" or "El Norte." Such different cultural perspectives open our eyes to counter narratives that challenge the usual telling of western history. His story of the Old West as "a great stewpot of cultures" is such a counter narrative that illuminates alternative ways to look at traditional history. This theme is not a new one. James Banks, in his analysis of multicultu-

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ral education, asserts that "implicit cultural assumptions, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the construction of knowledge" (Banks 1993, 25). Thus, West's theme is consistent with what several curriculum theorists have claimed about construction of knowledge as a social process.

The third theme—and arguably the most pervasive in West's manuscript—is the interdependence of time and place. "I can't tell my story about the history until I tell you more about the place," West remarked during his presentation last June at the Social Science Education Consortium Annual Conference in Boulder. His history of the Old West is replete with thoughts about migration, settlement patterns, and human-environmental interaction, concepts fundamental to a geographic perspective. His narrative emphasizes the trade and migration routes as well as the influence of climate and vegetation on changing settlement patterns. This theme has profound implications for the way a history curriculum is designed, a topic I will turn to in the next section of this article.

Although more a suggestion than a dominant theme, West also recommends the use of popular images as a point of departure for history instruction. Images such as the Indians on horseback, West suggests, "might have a particular pull on many students." West's recommendation makes sense, supported by research and advocated by constructivist theory about the importance of using the prior knowledge and experiences of students as entry points for the study of history.

What are the implications of West's themes for K-12 curriculum development in history? His themes raise questions about what knowledge is of most worth, about what constitutes best practice in teaching, and about how students learn history. What do we know about what content to teach and how to organize it? What do research and experience tell us about what is best practice in teaching history? What do research and experience tell us about how students learn history? At the same time, teachers tell us that "what is best practice" and "what research tells us" often ignore what is possible in the real world of the classroom. In this world, the themes espoused by West confront serious obstacles such as state curriculum standards, statewide assessment, insufficient teacher preparation, issues of classroom control, the developmental level of learners, and difficult-to-control outside social conditions that drive students away from rather than toward school. Thus, when examining the implications of West's themes for curriculum development, we cannot overlook the obstacles to their implementation. The remainder of this chapter will examine these implications and obstacles.

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Implications for Curriculum Development: What to Teach and How to Organize It

Key Ideas and Essential Questions

A central purpose of curriculum development is to provide a framework for selecting and organizing what is taught. West's emphasis on looking for patterns and big ideas that illuminate the human condition provides a valuable starting point for curriculum design. What West suggests has a long history of support among scholars in the social studies profession. Numerous educators and researchers (Brophy and VanSledright 1997; Torney-Purta 1991; Newmann 1988; Sizer 1985; Glaser 1984) advocate structuring information around key ideas to be developed in depth. In the same vein, the research from Harvard's Project Zero supports organizing content around generative topics (Wiske 1998). Generative topics are central to the discipline, are accessible and interesting to students, excite the intellect of the teacher, and connect easily with student experience. Without such a structure, history becomes nothing more than a parade of facts, fragmented pieces of knowledge without meaning, soon forgotten by most students.

Wineburg and Wilson (1988) in their "wisdom of practice" studies describe how teachers mesh their visions of history and teaching. The teachers they studied first turned inward to ponder and comprehend the key ideas, concepts, or interpretations of a historical period or event. What ideas in a given topic go to the heart of the discipline of history? What are the ideas that are enduring and persistent, that humankind has struggled to understand for centuries and will continue to ponder in the future? What ideas provide various entry points across different historical periods? West's theme of cultural confluence in the Old West is such an example. Once the big ideas are defined, Wineburg and Wilson's teachers then turned outward. These expert teachers placed themselves into the minds of their students, who lack the depth of understanding teachers possess. Their goal was to communicate ideas in ways that would be understandable to young people.

One way to develop such a curriculum is through the use of one or two essential questions that serve to organize and give meaning to content (Rossi 1997; Shapiro and Merryfield 1995; Wiggins 1989). These are questions that contain doubt or controversy, that are open to interpretation and multiple perspectives. For teachers, they serve as signals about how to organize and teach content. For students, they trigger inquiry and invite them to respond by bringing their own experiences into play. West's question about how cultures mesh together could easily

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serve as an organizing question for the study of numerous encounters and interactions in both U.S. and world history. Other examples of organizing questions include: Why do some conflicts escalate to violence? When should a country intervene in the affairs of another? Are there really heroes and villains? What is the role of government and the individual in dealing with poverty?

Most history curricula, however, are not organized in this fashion. What are the obstacles to constructing curriculum in this way? First is the emphasis placed in schools on coverage of information. For many social studies teachers, the concern for coverage derives from their belief that the acquisition and transmission of information is the purpose of instruction (Onosko 1991). For others, it reflects the emphasis, dominant in most states, on content-intensive standards and traditional forms of assessment. These standards and assessments pressure teachers to *teach to the test* out of fear that their students will do poorly. These concerns are legitimate ones that cannot be ignored. Yet the mindless coverage of fragmented facts does not facilitate improved retention of information. The challenge in curriculum development is to use the parade of fragmented content to help students explore the organizing ideas and questions. The two pieces can be complementary.

A second obstacle lies with the preparation of teachers. The use of key ideas and essential questions to organize curriculum requires a high level of scholarship that may be unrealistic to expect of many teachers. Wineburg and Wilson (1988) found that subject matter knowledge was a critical ingredient in teacher performance. With such knowledge, teachers have not only a storehouse of information but also a vision of history as a human construction. Yet not all teachers have such a background. Not all history teachers have majors in history (National Center for Educational Statistics 1998). These nonmajors in history may eventually acquire a larger store of factual knowledge but, most likely, without the understanding of history as a human construction. In an era of teacher shortages even in history, this obstacle is likely to grow.

Last, it is important to retain a sensitivity to the cognitive development of learners. Organizing curriculum around big ideas and essential questions involves a different role for the learner (Rossi 1995). It challenges the learner to be prepared to struggle with knowledge. The learner is no longer the passive receptor of knowledge but is expected to be able to use knowledge to answer questions to which there may be no right answers. This is a formidable challenge even for the most able learner. While students are capable of historical understanding, it is important to remember that they are not specialists (Brophy and VanSledright 1997). It is critical to remember that fourth- and fifth-graders, and even many middle schoolers, are concrete, not abstract, thinkers. Thus,

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it is wise to design curriculum around essential questions only with the full appreciation of the developmental aspects of learning.

History as Narrative

From another perspective, perhaps we should worry less about the thinking level of learners and more about providing them with good stories and narratives. West's narratives of the migration along "The Great North Trail" or "the horseback Indians" are examples that "a story well told" may trigger deeper historical understanding. In fact, research has revealed the beneficial effects of historical narrative on the historical understanding of children (Levstik and Barton 1997; Downey and Levstik 1991; Levstik 1989).

What is a good narrative, and what are its beneficial effects? According to Downey and Levstik (1991, 401), a good narrative is "writing shaped as a story . . .[that] flows on a chain of cause and effect that has a narrator who takes a stance...." It deals with the particular, people at a time and place. It particularizes and personalizes history; it focuses on enduring human dilemmas where real people make real choices; it shows how people do make a difference. It illuminates how one choice emerges from earlier ones in a chronological sequence. The benefits of narrative are many. Good stories are more compelling reading than textbooks because of the vitality of the detail, the authenticity of the language, and the insight provided into everyday experience (Levstik and Barton 1997). Because narrative is human, it makes more sense to children. Because it moves away from the abstract and moves toward specific people, students become more interested. The implication for curriculum specialists and teachers is to identify the stories in history that define our culture and that reveal how we are similar to and different from other cultures. It argues for the inclusion of children's and adolescent literature as an integral part of the history curriculum. It argues that curriculum developers should design curriculum that looks beyond the textbook to diaries, letters, and photographs.

This is not to say that teaching history through narrative is without its dangers. Barton (1997) claims that students often do not approach a narrative with a critical eye. Rather they accept the story as truth. Thus, a curriculum that utilizes narrative should ask students to look for other accounts, to explore counter narratives, to compare the account with a textbook, and to ask questions about the accuracy of what they are reading. Without the search for the counter narrative, students will never acquire the skills and disposition to ask for evidence nor understand that

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history is interpretation. Without the critical eye, the conventional telling of history will not be challenged.

In addition, the search for a counter narrative, particularly among older students, often provides the impetus for higher-order thinking and deeper historical understanding. The recent research of Harvard's Project Zero on "a pedagogy of understanding" confirms the value of the counter narrative in the high school history classroom. A group of 18 secondary level teachers from content areas including history identified the importance of selecting content and topics that confronted the historical myths and misconceptions often present in the minds of students (Gardner, Perkins, and Perrone 1991). Their finding is confirmed by Wineburg and Wilson's (1988, 54) description of a classroom debate on the legitimacy of the American Revolution that documented the surprise and excitement of students when they discovered that "the Tories were not the villains depicted in textbooks, but real people that saw the world differently from their rebel neighbors." These findings are not surprising. Dewey (1938) claimed that thinking begins with doubt and ambiguity. Developing curriculum that explores historical myths and utilizes counter narratives has the potential to trigger higher-order thinking and deepen historical understanding.

The challenges of integrating counter narratives into the teaching of history are the same as those described for the use of organizing questions. First, the ability of teachers to do so requires both a well-developed knowledge base and a vision of history as an interpretive enterprise. Not all teachers, even at the high school level, have such a foundation and vision. Second, where does the counter narrative fit into the history standards that place pressure on curriculum developers and teachers to cover vast amounts of historical information, rarely leaving time to explore the counter narratives?

Integrating History and Geography

One of West's strongest themes is that "human experience...is a dance, thousands of years old, between people and place, history and geography." He reminds us that all events occur at the intersection of time and place, that history and geography are disciplines that march together side by side. Yet there is no doubt that history has always driven what is taught in social studies (Jenness 1990). Geography, on the other hand, has been viewed as an "enabling" subject involving place-naming and locating historical events but bearing little relationship to the discipline of geography (Jenness 1990). For many history teach-

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ers, geography has meant simply asking student to memorize and place countries, cities, and landforms on a map.

The perspectives of historians and geographers do differ. The geographer examines the world from both a spatial and an ecological perspective, seeking to answer questions like where is it, why is it there, why do people settle there, how do physical systems affect human systems, and how do human actions modify the physical environment. The historian focuses on the social, economic, scientific/technological, political and cultural spheres of human activity, seeking to answer questions such as when did it happen, why did it happen then, why is it significant, how am I and how are we connected to it, and how has the world changed and remained the same.

However, the fragmentation of the two disciplines is a mistake. Geography and history are complementary subjects best taught together within a social studies framework. In recent publications, both the National Council for the Social Studies (1994) and the National Council for Geographic Education (1998) support the integrated study of these disciplines. The task in curriculum development is to initiate a conversation between the two perspectives, a conversation about how different groups perceive and use the environment in different ways and how that perception changes over time. That conversation does not exist in many social studies curricula and textbooks today.

The challenge is how to operationalize such a conversation. Both Bednarz (1997) and Rossi (1999) have proposed questions that serve as a framework for integrating the two disciplines when studying events in a given place: Their questions include:

1. What was the geographic context? What was it like in a particular place at a particular time?

2. What was the historical context? What human aspirations and strivings were important at the time?

3. How did the geographic context influence and shape historical events?

4. How did historical events shape the geographic context?

5. Why was the change in the geographic context significant?

6. How did people perceive both the geographic context and what was happening at that particular time?

Curriculum designers, textbook authors, and teachers might use these questions as guidelines that help students to describe and explain the interaction of people with their environments over time.

Like previous implications, insufficient teacher preparation often inhibits such integration. At the primary and upper elementary grades,

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teachers are expected to be knowledgeable about all the disciplines but are often judged by their ability to teach reading and math. Rarely do they have sufficient content backgrounds, no less majors in history or geography. The predominant major among middle and high school social studies teachers is history. They naturally bring a historical perspective into the classroom. Their understanding of geography may not extend beyond the themes of location and place. Without extensive staff development, expecting teachers to have the knowledge or perspective to integrate the two disciplines is not realistic. West's ability to integrate the two is rare.

The same can be said for textbooks available in most school systems. While several history textbooks contain sidebars that introduce geographic concepts, the role and significance of geography in the story is rarely a central theme. Geography textbooks are equally guilty. While they usually include a section on the history of a region, rarely do they connect the history with the physical and cultural characteristics of the region introduced in other sections of the chapter. Without changes in the way textbooks are organized, teachers will have to rely on supplemental materials for the resources to integrate the two disciplines.

The themes of integrating history and geography, of humanizing history through stories that define who we are, and of constructing curriculum around big ideas provide a framework for teaching history as the infinite game West recommends. At the same time, the obstacles to playing the game are multiple, grounded in realities of state standards, high stakes assessment, insufficient teacher preparation in an era of increasing teacher shortage, and the developmental level of learners. The rules of the finite game alter the way curriculum is developed and instruction is delivered in the practical, everyday classroom.

Implications for Curriculum Development: How Students Learn

There is danger in limiting the focus in curriculum development to what to teach and how to organize the content. During the reform effort known as "The New Social Studies" in the 1960s, scholars, following the ideas of Bruner, sought to introduce students to the concepts and modes of inquiry of historians and social scientists. In the process, they ignored the interests and experiences of young people (Jenness 1990; Hertzberg 1981; Haas 1977). They ignored how students learned. What about children and young adolescents? How do they think about history? What are the implications of West's manuscript in terms of what we know about how students learn?

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As the failure of the "New Social Studies" pointed out, the way experts think about history is different from the way novices think about it (Voss 1989; Voss, Tyler, and Yengo 1983; Voss, Greene, and Post 1983). The knowledge of experts rests on a sophisticated domain-specific base in terms of density, accessibility, and organization. The knowledge base is sufficient to allow them to organize it around a number of key ideas, enabling them to retain and use the knowledge more effectively. In addition, experts look for underlying points of view and subtext (Wineburg 1991). The knowledge of novices consists of bits and pieces of information, not well-integrated. Thus, while fifth-graders may be capable of historical understanding, they are limited by prior knowledge and the structures with which to organize that knowledge in meaningful ways (Brophy and VanSledright 1997). High school students view texts as authoritative and are more interested in establishing the facts; they are confused by shifting viewpoints (Wineburg 1991). The clear implication for curriculum development is the importance of developing an in-depth, rather than superficial knowledge base. This includes providing a conceptual framework that allows students to find meaning in details. VanSledright (1997) found that adding one or two structural layers when accessing facts helped students attain a deeper level of understanding. In addition, students should be taught to read historical accounts for subtext in order to understand the indeterminance of authority and the slipperiness of meaning.

In developing such a curriculum, specialists and teachers cannot afford to ignore Dewey's (1938) reminder that knowledge has meaning only as it interacts with the experiences of the learner. A basic principle of constructivist learning is that people try to understand the new in terms of what they already know. Learning is an active and internal process in which every individual constructs meaning through the creation of mental structures that function to organize and filter information. Thus, good curriculum from a constructivist point of view builds on the knowledge and experiences learners bring to school. When students are able to connect school knowledge to their own mental structures, historical understanding deepens.

The challenge is how to connect historical knowledge that often seems distant and foreign to students to their own experiences and prior knowledge. Barton (1997) points out that students learn a great deal about history outside of school, even though they may not initially see the connection between their prior knowledge and school knowledge. What they know comes from historic buildings and sites, artifacts, stories told by relatives, and images presented in the media. Barton also discovered that students often know more about social history than political and economic events and institutions. The implications of these

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ideas for the design of units and lessons are clear. First, it makes sense as a starting point to begin with interviewing relatives, handling old objects, looking at photographs, or visiting places in the community either by computer or an actual field trip. Second, it makes sense to utilize and build upon the students' greater knowledge of social history.

This is not to say that making the connection with student experience should be the endgame. Dewey (1938) and Barton (1997) do not mean to dismiss disciplinary knowledge, only that it be preceded by and integrated with the prior knowledge and experiences of the learner. The task is to integrate student knowledge with the relevant historical information.

Constructivist approaches to teaching history extend beyond connecting student experience with historical knowledge. The cognitive constructivists, influenced by Piaget, emphasize the assimilation of new knowledge into existing mental schemes and the restructuring of other schemes when information is too divergent to be assimilated (Schuerman 1998). Cognitive constructivism also claims that what gives rise to understanding historical knowledge is a student's own struggle to make sense of information by permitting them to identify historical questions, make hypotheses, and carry out inquiry projects using a variety of sources and perspectives (Duckworth 1979; Henriques 1990; Scheurman 1998). It involves challenging students' conceptions of historical reality, presenting students with problems or events that contradict their expectations and opinions. It means allowing students the opportunity to ask questions about the conceptions they want to investigate.

This cognitive constructivist conception of learning depicts the learner as a lone investigator, a young researcher exploring problems and constructing schemata in a solitary fashion. It fails to account for the social aspect of thinking. The social constructivists, influenced by Vygotsky, advocate the importance of social interaction between learner and teacher and between learners in knowledge construction (Torney-Purta 1989). Active social interaction with different interpretations of knowledge is often important in creating cognitive conflict and helping students develop their own understanding of the historical problem or event. Both conceptions of constructivism have a natural affinity for approaches to history teaching in which students use knowledge to conduct open-ended inquiry or solve problems. The point is that it is important to identify the misconceptions students have about history and work to change and extend their understanding. In many ways, that is exactly what West advocates in his vision of history as an infinite game.

Despite the compatibility of West's infinite game with constructivist approaches, much history instruction is directed toward the simple trans-

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mission of information and the skills to process that knowledge. Most curriculum documents developed by school divisions and history departments reflect the transmission-of-information model. While a skillful teacher can take a traditional curriculum and turn it around on its nose, the curriculum itself does not provide the framework to do so. Most curriculum documents turn people back to traditional ways of transmitting knowledge that do not work. The central challenge in curriculum development is how to construct a curriculum that reflects a constructivist view that matches the content to be taught with how students learn.

The implementation of a curriculum based on constructivist principles creates new expectations and dilemmas for teachers and students. It requires a different role for each. Lampert (1985) found that the application of constructivist views of learning in elementary science classrooms led to impossible practical dilemmas for teachers. Likewise, Rossi (1995) uncovered similar teaching dilemmas in a tenth-grade public issues class in which the teacher employed constructivist ideas. The role of teacher as guide or facilitator in constructivist approaches requires greater teacher spontaneity and flexibility in a complex environment. It requires a more open pattern of interaction in the classroom. The teacher is more dependent on the well-prepared student. It also requires students to no longer be the passive receptors of knowledge but to develop their own interpretations of knowledge. It shifts the responsibility for learning to the student. These new roles and dilemmas mean that any curriculum revision must be accompanied by extensive staff development, more than a few workshops at the beginning of the school year, and regular reflection by teachers and students. Such opportunities are not currently available in many school divisions and classrooms.

Playing the Infinite Game

Theory, research, and best practice in history education support Elliott West's vision of history as an infinite game. The implications of his chapter for curriculum development are clear-cut:

1. Select and organize historical content around enduring ideas, patterns, and essential questions that illuminate the human condition.

2. Utilize historical narratives and compelling stories that focus on human dilemmas and provide opportunities for students to view the narrative with a critical eye.

3. Design a framework that promotes the interaction of geographic concepts and historical events.

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4. Connect historical and geographic knowledge with the prior knowledge, experiences, and interests of children and adolescents.

5. Design curriculum around the principles of constructivist learning, providing opportunities for student inquiry, problem solving, and social interaction concerning questions that challenge student conceptions of historical reality.

Designing and implementing a curriculum based on these principles is a formidable task. There are powerful obstacles inside and outside the classroom and school that inhibit such a design. Content-intensive state standards, high stakes assessment, and the belief systems of many teachers place priority on the mere transmission of information. Teachers may not have sufficient subject matter and pedagogical preparation to design, let alone teach such a curriculum. A curriculum based on constructivist ideas creates new expectations and dilemmas for teachers and students. The rub is that the infinite game is most often played on a field more compatible with the rules of the finite game. As curriculum specialists and teachers work to design curriculum along the ideas consistent with best practice, they should be prepared to adjust to the realities of the finite game.

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The Implications of New Research and Scholarship in History and Geography for Undergraduate and Teacher Education

By Phil Klein and Fritz Fischer

Abstract

Recent trends in research in both history and geography have called into question long-cherished concepts in these fields. For people engaged in undergraduate education, especially of those students who plan to teach, these challenges mean that traditional methods of instruction need reexamination. This paper argues, first, that undergraduate instruction in both fields must begin by breaking down any existing misconceptions or oversimplifications about history and geography held by college students. Doing so means recasting historical narratives to be more inclusive of the diverse range of human experience, in order to present a more nuanced version of these stories. In geography, the advent of content standards in schools necessarily places the focus of educating undergraduates on familiarizing them with specific geographic concepts, skills, and perspectives. Second, for both fields, teachers can facilitate the learning of these new approaches by emphasizing student-centered inquiry and discovery pedagogy, in which undergraduates are encouraged to reconstruct their conceptions of history and geography by working with real data concerning actual events and places.

Keywords: inquiry, pedagogical content knowledge, standards, undergraduate history education, undergraduate geography education

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Introduction

To discuss the implications of current research in history and geography, it is helpful first to examine common traits in the papers by West and Riebsame. Both discuss current scholarship in their fields with the tacit acknowledgment that the boundaries between history and geography are at best fuzzy. The examples discussed by both authors make it clear that the examination of enduring issues can be a powerful pedagogical device for the social sciences and that, despite those fuzzy boundaries, both history and geography provide different yet useful perspectives on such issues. Both authors also challenge simplistic temporal and spatial concepts traditionally employed by practitioners in these fields: the "eras" of historians and the "regions" of geographers.

Such ideas may be viewed in the popular culture as absolute truths, when in fact historians and geographers continually challenge and develop their central concepts. Students must grasp the dynamic nature of these disciplines, in order to fully appreciate what it means to think like a historian or geographer. Together, these papers imply that college must become the place where future citizens have any misconceptions and cherished notions about time and space challenged, and where shallow understanding is replaced by a new, critical framework that students use to develop their historical and geographical perspectives. This growth should enable students to generate deeper knowledge and encourage them to become lifelong learners, whether or not they are future teachers.

Despite the title of this paper, we do not distinguish between "undergraduate education" and "teacher education." It is our belief that, in a liberal arts education, history and geography serve in part as the backbones of citizenship education. Whether those citizens opt to become educators or choose other careers is ultimately unimportant. Naturally, there is the concern that future teachers have sufficient depth of knowledge in order to teach this content themselves. As we will argue, however, the surest means to achieve that end is to provide undergraduates with the tools to become lifelong learners, so that they can continue to create new knowledge as times and places change. Development of such inquiry skills should satisfy the citizenship needs of non-teachers just as well as teachers.

The following discussion includes two main sections. The first section is concerned with deconstruction: telling stories that clarify misconceptions about history and geography. The second focuses on construction: providing learning opportunities for undergraduates that equip them with the ability to create their own, richer conceptualizations of the social world. This structure reflects a chronology. The first sec-

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tion deals with the background fundamentals of knowledge about the fields, while the second section addresses how college students can learn to continue their education once they have finished their degree. In short, this paper picks up on the idea of education as an "infinite game," a topic we will explore again in our conclusion.

In order to discuss how experienced history and geography educators can transfer their knowledge and perspectives about the world to beginners, we employ the concept of "pedagogical content knowledge" (Shulman 1987). Pedagogical content knowledge is the intersection of subject-matter knowledge with knowledge about how to teach that subject most effectively. An "expert" (defined as one with a high degree of pedagogical content knowledge) has the skill to teach a subject both thoroughly and effectively. Experts grasp a subject's key concepts and broad themes, the major ideas and common threads that comprise any discipline's perspective. Experts also have the pedagogical skill and flexibility to identify an appropriate method of instruction for the various concepts and themes (Gudmundsdottir and Shulman 1987). Experts with deep disciplinary content knowledge have a complex schematic understanding of the linkages between individual concepts, enabling them to perceive a broader framework for the discipline as a whole (Chi, Feltovich, and Glaser 1982; Klein 1997). Experts are able to graft new ideas and experiences onto this existing, well-formed framework. Armed with this framework, experts can design a course to cover a subject's concepts in a logical sequence, weaving the units of instruction together so that this conceptual structure emerges for their students.

"Novices," by contrast, are individuals in the process of acquiring this ability. Novices are less able to create meaningful conceptual categories; their development of a conceptual framework for a subject is, in a sense, less efficient. Novices lack the depth of disciplinary knowledge necessary to be able to teach concepts in a flexible manner that can reach a diversity of learning styles. Clearly, acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge is a critical part of the process of becoming a teacher; its acquisition is also part of viewing teaching as a profession that necessitates lifelong learning (Shulman 1998).

Retelling Stories

In History

Since the founding of the SSEC in 1963, the study of history has experienced drastic changes. The field has been attempting to come to grips with calamitous political and social changes in the wider world as

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well as significant shifts within academia. The civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, feminism, and the political upheavals of the 1970s all contributed to this state of flux within the discipline. How should history instructors at the undergraduate college level and trainers of future social studies teachers incorporate these changes into their classrooms?

Undergraduate history teachers and university teacher-trainers need to both "deconstruct" and reconstruct the traditional story of American history. Students today encounter this story not only in the formal school setting but also in daily encounters within the broader popular culture. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, we realized that the traditional stories of American history were incomplete. Traditional history excluded or marginalized huge chunks of the American people: women, African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Asian-Americans, and gay Americans, just to name a few. This made the story not only incomplete but often inaccurate, because without these pieces in the puzzle, we could never properly understand the other, more traditional pieces. Undergraduate teachers must show students the incompleteness and biased inaccuracy of the traditional story. For example, we must not feel that it is enough, when teaching about the revolutionary era, to tell a linear story of the founding fathers. Rather, in our "quest for a full and complex portrait of late eighteenth century American life," we need to move towards an understanding of a "wide variety of interest groups, marginal communities and social outsiders" (Kerber 1990, 27–28).

How should history instructors deal with the sobering fact that the traditional narrative is incomplete at best and inaccurate at worst? One option is to follow the most radical postmodernist ideas and abandon any attempt to reconstruct the stories of the past. Obviously, such an option fails our students—none of us wants them to be ignorant of the past. Instead, we must accept the limitations and imperfections of our work while continuing to strive for understanding. In his study of the story of Watergate and its implications, sociologist Michael Schudson provides a stirring and useful metaphor to describe this role for the historian:

> Imagine the historian as a sculptor, facing a slab of marble. The sculptor-historian can make the marble into a variety of shapes, but not an infinite variety. The sculptor has freedom to interpret as he or she chooses, but the freedom is limited (Schudson 1992, 219).

A first step in sculpting the past is to accept that American history alone, or even American history plus western civilization, is incomplete. The Vietnam experience pointed out the need for a more global understanding of our world and for more global history in the undergraduate

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curriculum. We hear the incessant refrain from politicians and the media that we now live in a global marketplace, and it is the task of the historian to try to tell the story of this global marketplace as accurately and completely as possible. This is, after all, what historians do—tell stories. These stories can become uncritically accepted myths, leading to potentially dangerous misunderstandings. Part of the reason for "deconstructing" the traditional story-myths is to teach students how to analyze with a critical eye in order to avoid oversimplifications. Students should recognize when a story is incomplete, too simple, or significantly biased. The students then should understand that traditional stories can be told in non-traditional ways in order to better understand the world of the past.

Recent historians have provided us with excellent models that describe how such reconstruction might be done. The historical narrative has witnessed a renaissance in the past decade, as exemplified by the huge academic and popular acclaim for Ambrose's (1994; 1997a and b) works on World War II and Lewis and Clark. West provides us with an excellent example in this volume. He examines a very traditional story, that of the settling of the Great Plains. Yet his is not a story of white triumphalism in an empty, deserted wilderness. He adds the complexity of different ideas and methodological approaches to make this story exciting and fresh. He utilizes ideas from anthropology, family history, women's history, and environmental studies to tell this story in a new, "thicker" fashion. His will not be the final story about this topic, nor should his story be accepted as truth. But his complex, nuanced narrative provides students and teachers with a model of how we can attempt to reconstruct the stories of the past.

One of the most respected American historians (and president of the American Historical Association in the year 2000), Eric Foner, has recently accomplished a similar task in *The Story of American Freedom.* Long a staple in the history classroom, no story could be more traditional than the story of American freedom. Yet it is an incomplete and even inaccurate story if it does not examine how freedom has been understood from different perspectives. It is not enough to teach how Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt understood freedom. One of Foner's central arguments is that "instead of a predetermined category or static concept, freedom became a terrain of conflict, its substance open to different, sometimes contradictory interpretations" (Foner 1998, 101). So to move toward an understanding of this complex concept of freedom, we must also understand the concept through the eyes of free blacks in Louisiana in 1815, women seamstresses in Boston in 1850, and Internet-rights advocates today. Teachers should not give up on the traditional story of freedom—rather, they

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need to reconstruct this story (stories, actually) by providing students with a nuanced understanding of the past.

It is important that this story be presented to the students in all its human complexity. As West intimates, life is messy. Undergraduate history teachers need to impart this to their students. We must not flatten out our history into a prefabricated menu of self-contained eras. In his hugely popular and critically acclaimed works on World War II, Ambrose (1994; 1997a) shows that D-Day and its aftermath were much more than the inevitable and linear march of the Allies across Europe. Full of confusion, pain, humor, and tragedy, this is a real human story of the past, and the public responds to such "messiness," as proven in Ambrose's success as well as the even larger success of Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. Trying to understand this messiness helps provide continuity for today's students who want to be able to connect with the past. Because of Ambrose and Spielberg, Americans in 2000 can connect with Americans of 1944. Because we can trace current problems in family life and in living within our environment to the problems of the past, we can gain a better understanding of both the present and the past (West 1998).

Undergraduate history instructors must help students think of history as a story, a story crafted through the use of specific historical methods. Instructors need to first show students that many, if not most, of the traditional stories are not "truth," and then lead them towards a reconstructed, nuanced version of the stories of the past. Although this was indeed a goal of those who wrote the national history standards, this task need not be politically charged (Nash, Crabtree, and Dunn 1997). Rather, the task is at the heart of what undergraduate instructors seek to do: to teach critical thinking skills and democratic educational concepts. Instructors can accomplish these goals by using the tools of a historian to move towards a new narrative. Instructors can model this process for students in two ways. First, they can teach students how to tell stories and then how to craft these stories using the tools of a historian.

In Geography

What is the parallel to story-telling in geography education? When one views a discipline, such as geography, as essentially a series of stories that organize information about the world so that people might better comprehend its nature, the parallel becomes clear. Geography educators, however, do not usually speak in terms of their discipline's content as *stories*, per se. Rather, in describing their field to non-geographers, as has been done in documents explaining the geography stand-

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ards (e.g., GESP 1994), they usually speak of the concepts, skills, and perspectives about which a geographically aware person is informed. In this section, we will explore why the approach of re-telling these "stories" is both as appropriate and effective for geography as for history.

Let us first return to the notion of pedagogical content knowledge. Nurturing this form of knowledge must be a primary consideration for those teaching geography to future teachers. Recent work by Klein (1997) suggests how to develop pedagogical content knowledge in geography teachers. Her qualitative analysis of differing conceptual frameworks in expert and novice geography teachers mirrors the results of expert-novice studies in other fields. She examined the conceptual structures of two academic geographers, three expert geography teachers (having many years of teaching experience and extensive inservice preparation in geography), and three novice geography teachers (fresh out of their teacher-education programs). Based on analyses of a card-sorting task, concept maps of textbooks made by the subjects, and interviews, Klein (1997) drew five conclusions relevant to the present discussion.

1. Both expert and novice teachers' knowledge of geographic concepts is fragmentary compared to that of the academic, professional geographers.

2. Both expert and novice teachers possess a static view of geography; they do not perceive it as a body of ever-changing knowledge.

3. Novices lack the ability to manipulate concepts flexibly in order to teach them effectively (e.g., inventing several ways to present the same concept).

4. Novices lack the skills to interpret spatial data and make reasoned conclusions from those data.

5. Novices have had much less exposure to courses that presented geography in a conceptually based manner.

One could well argue that her final point underlies all her other conclusions. These results demonstrate the signal importance of sufficient course preparation in geography for future teachers. One or two introductory courses are not adequate to foster the depth of subject-matter knowledge necessary to support the acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge.

Most critical, however, in the context of this paper, is the teachers' perception of geography as a static field (point 2 above). This brings us to the implications of new research in geography for undergraduate and teacher education. It seems reasonable to assert that if one perceives a subject as "completed," with no new discoveries awaiting an inquirer, then one might find it unnecessary to acquire an attitude of lifelong,

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ongoing learning. Similarly, if one perceives a set of facts about the world to be somehow received from an authority with no sense of how these conceptualizations were developed, then one might not value learning *how* to think geographically.

Undergraduate instructors must emphasize that geography is not a set of received, permanent facts. Rather, it is a lively field of debate, in which ideas and concepts about spatial relationships change in response to the shifting realities inherent in this dynamic world. One of those evolving geographic concepts discussed by Riebsame—regions—can illustrate how the dynamism of geography might be made evident. Understanding how disciplinary ideas form and change is critical to developing pedagogical content knowledge. In the words of Douglass (1998, 62), "[W]hen one feels comfortable with ideas, ways of bringing those ideas to life in the classroom follow rather naturally."

Even if, as Riebsame described, postmodernist human geographers reject the notion of regions because they are not mappable by some quantitative measure and are purely mental constructs without grounding in reality, it is our belief that they remain a useful heuristic device for geography education. As Riebsame also points out, the regional concept has more meaning for non-geographers, both laypeople and scholars. Thus, it is incumbent on college geography instructors to examine this concept in their courses, so that future citizens develop a more complex, but critical, understanding of the nuances of this idea. An integral part of this knowledge is appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses embedded in the very process of defining regions.

The region concept thrives outside the realm of geography because people, perhaps without consciously realizing it, find this traditional geographic prism very helpful as a way to comprehend a complex world. There can be no doubt the concept is flawed and simplistic—it is, after all, no more than a geographic form of classification. Consider a parallel: Expert botanists are apt to differentiate a greater number of taxa than novices, but experts also recognize the limitations and assumptions underlying the botanical classification system. Nevertheless, botanists continues to use the system, if for no other reason than it facilitates communication. Regions serve much the same function for geography. The challenge in geography education is to provide an instructional framework that enables students to realize both the advantages and disadvantages of this concept. Thinking of the world in terms of some comfortable, familiar regional structure may be soothing for those trying to discern order, but (fortunately for educators), the world is more interesting than that. With exposure to the "messy reality," no simplistic popular misconception about static regions could hope to survive.

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So how can geography educators effectively use the region concept as a pedagogical device to help students improve their subject-matter knowledge? One way would be to contrast "formal" and "functional" regions. College texts are apt to present these terms as definitions—in short, as received facts. The debate to which Riebsame referred, in which the notion of functional regions emerged to challenge the inadequacy of the traditional, formal region concept, is nowhere discussed. To students, it must appear that these terms have always existed side-by-side: static, frozen ideas. If, on the other hand, we present the concept of functional regions as a response to the failure of "formal" regions to align with reality, then we might awaken in our students the recognition that geographic perceptions of the world can change if they do not reflect reality.

Further, we must acknowledge that all regions are, at some level, purely perceptual. Any type of region, however defined, is a mental construct; regions are real only as long as people perceive them to have meaning. Because regions are simply a method of spatial classification, they possess benefits and problems of any such attempt to organize reality. Bringing order to the world clearly has pedagogical value. A regional framework for organizing information about the world allows students to begin to make valid deductions, with which they can begin to study new places and gain new insights. For example, if a student has never heard of Kyrgyzstan, but knows both (a) it fits within the designated region of Southwest Asia, and (b) nearly all countries in this region are predominantly Islamic, then the student could make the reasonable (and correct) prediction that most Kyrgyz are Muslims. This makes teaching about this place easier, if, for example, one wished to use Kyrgyzstan as a case study of Muslim fundamentalists fomenting revolutionary actions throughout the region.

Simultaneously, we must make clear that the differences within any defined region are sometimes just as interesting as the similarities that were used as criteria to define it. Again, Southwest Asia provides a useful illustration. Many U.S. college students seem to suffer from the misconception that either Arabs are the only ethnic group in the region or that the Islamic faith is monolithic and uniform. (This is anecdotal evidence only, culled from exam results in introductory geography courses over the past few years, but it appears to be a persistent and common error.) The ethnic diversity of the region is not well understood; for instance, even after instruction, many students continue to identify Iranians as predominantly Arab. Similarly unrecognized are the facts that Islam has two main branches and that this division underlies several conflicts in the area. Emphasizing such differences within regions is necessary in order for students to comprehend the weaknesses

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of the concept. While regional classifications help simplify the world, the messy reality reminds us that oversimplification must be avoided.

We must demonstrate that conceptualizations of regions change. Consider the experience of college students, enrolled in a typical, introductory, general-education, world geography class. They purchase a very expensive textbook and are assigned to read it to accompany lectures or other in-class activities. Readings may or may not closely follow the lectures, but in any case, the text presents a host of geographic "facts"—often, as noted before, without providing the historical development of the ideas. Nearly all introductory texts are organized regionally, so the student is trained to think according to a particular world-view, one in fact that is remarkably consistent across such texts. Although this is a snapshot of the world—our current conceptualization—the text does not necessarily indicate that. It would be an interesting exercise to reproduce contents from earlier editions of the same texts, to reveal how geographic conceptions are reviewed and modified! The demise of the Soviet Union and reorientation of its former republics into new regional associations would certainly be clear in any text. Similarly, recent editions of the DeBlij and Muller text (1994) present the western Pacific Rim quite differently than the current edition (2000), primarily because of China's emergence as a major political and economic player.

A blend of historical and regional geography could serve as a productive model. If one comprehends the contents of a regional textbook as but one snapshot in time, geography takes on a three-dimensional richness. Such depth is evidently lacking in the uncomplicated conceptions of the field exhibited by novice teachers. Perhaps the best metaphor here would be to consider a loaf of bread, wherein geographers' current conceptions of the regional classification of places represent the topmost slice. Slicing deeper, further back in time, reveals differing conceptions; each successive slice of time exposes a different geography. (Visualize a loaf of map-bread here, where each slice displays a different map.) Each slice would help students both to comprehend the context of significant historical events and the perpetual nature of geographical change.

Recent events in Yugoslavia provide an illustration for this approach. In geographic terms, the region of Kosovo has undergone a shift from being Serbia's national core to being its periphery. Using historical maps of Europe (e.g., Rand McNally 1965), one can trace the extent of 14th-century Serbia, from Belgrade on the northern fringe to modern Greece on the south, with Kosovo at the very heart of territory under Serb control. Later maps show the Hapsburgs and Ottomans extending control over historical Serb lands. When the Serbian state returned in

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the 19th century, its former core, Kosovo, was excluded; not until 1912 did the Serb nation reclaim its one-time heart from the Islamic Turks. With the more rapid population growth of Islamic Albanian settlers in Kosovo, the region was no longer a Serbian heartland in reality, yet the depth of national identity with the region remained strong. Losing and regaining its land has been a defining experience of the Serb nation, but lacking this perspective, students may find it difficult to comprehend the desire of some Serbs to rid Kosovo of its non-Serbian population.

To summarize, thinking about teaching regions in the context of fostering pedagogical content knowledge leads us to conclude that educators should emphasize that regions are a dynamic, mental construct. Future teachers and other citizens must appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of this concept while recognizing that its fluidity can be one of its principal strengths. A historical perspective would nicely complement the presentation of this exquisitely geographical notion. Explaining how geographers have conceptualized the world at various times in history, and for what reasons, might help future teachers develop the ability to critically examine the simplified world-view of the texts they use in college. Given that they will likely be facing similarly static, encyclopedic, precollegiate texts in their own future teaching assignments, this is an important skill to nurture.

Modeling Inquiries

What is the best way for undergraduate and teacher education instructors to transmit the knowledge required to develop solid conceptual understanding of history and geography? Based upon the idea of pedagogical content knowledge, instructors should be concerned not only with retelling stories but also with modeling inquiries. Through historical narratives and geographic concepts, we have come to understand the nature of the temporal and spatial phenomena that shape our world. But it is only through inquiry that we, as educators, can suggest how this knowledge may be continually expanded. It is essential for educators to model the means by which practitioners of a discipline obtain new stories and revise existing ones.

In History

After undergraduate instructors have deconstructed traditional history by showing how messy the past is, how can they then reconstruct this history in a form that will be helpful to students? We can find an answer by starting with the basic content, the stuff of history. Teaching

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must begin with content. What is the content of history? Primary sources—the words, ideas, images, and thoughts of people in the past. Historians analyze content in order to fashion explanations of it. History teaching must begin from the same place. Often, history teaching devolves into little more than standing in front of a room and explaining facts to students. But that is not what historians do—why should it be what history students do? Historians find facts through research and try to put these facts together into some sort of historically meaningful sequence.

Therefore, we advise that history instructors break out of the traditional mold of lecturer and become modelers of historical analysis through active, student-centered learning strategies. Many historians are skeptical of such an approach. In March of 1997, the newsletter of the American Historical Association featured a debate between well-respected scholar/teachers on this subject. Trifan of Missouri Western State College defended the lecture because it has "been around for centuries and has proven remarkably effective in helping to develop educated individuals." He attacked active-learning strategies as unscholarly enterprises that were "overtly destructive of educational standards and quality." Trifan argued that the vast majority of active-learning strategies had been promulgated by psychologists and educational theorists and represented fads devoid of disciplinary content (Trifan 1997). We believe Trifan and others are right to be suspicious of activities that stress process over content. The question is not how to make a particular course more interactive—it is how to create the most effective method to allow students to learn content. At times, the most effective method might be a traditional lecture. Many of us have had experiences listening to lectures that presented an argument in such elegant and forceful terms that we were mesmerized by its power. At other times, lectures may not be effective. Content and method must be carefully matched to allow students to appreciate that content.

In a small class, it is fairly easy to find ways to give students hands-on experience with this stuff of history. If an instructor can interact with students on a personal basis, he or she can help students to work with the building blocks of a discipline. In larger classes, such activities are more difficult to manage. Yet even in larger classes instructors can create activities that model the historian's craft. One example is a "collage." The collage begins with the stuff of history, historical documents, and attempts to give students an understanding of a particular era in history. The collage is not a snapshot, however, because if we are to really understand an historical era, we must understand that it is messy, complicated and mixed together, as a collage might be.

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To create the collage, the instructor organizes the room into four or five stations. This activity works best in rooms with movable desks, but can also work in other kinds of situations. The class is split into groups, and students receive a study guide with three or four questions on it that they will attempt to answer at each station. Each group of students begins at one of the stations around the room. At each station, the students encounter a different set of documents, enough for each student to have his or her own copy. One of the points of the exercise is that each set of documents prompts different answers on their worksheet. The worksheet might also ask the students to relate one station to the previous station, prodding them into comparative historical analysis. The students have 7 to 10 minutes at each station, time spent in examining the documents, discussing their findings, and answering the questions on the study guide. After the 7 to 10 minutes, the students stand up and move clockwise to the next station, examining and analyzing the documents at that station. After 40 to 45 minutes, the students will have examined each document and the teacher can provide some closure by facilitating a closing discussion with the entire class. This closing discussion should include specific questions designed to explicitly examine the variety of storylines illustrated by the documents.

This method has a number of advantages in teaching historical topics. First, it gets students' blood flowing—a real advantage for an early morning or midafternoon class. More importantly, the students interact with primary documents. They have time to examine them and discuss the meaning of the documents in a small group. Examining a number of different kinds of documents from the same era enables them to learn that ideas and people in every historical era are complicated and diverse.

The American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s provides a perfect topic for an effective collage. This collage includes freedom songs, poetry from black activists, letters from workers in the Mississippi Freedom Summer project, an audio of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech," and a video clip from *Malcolm X*, starring Denzel Washington. One of the most successful aspects of this presentation is the counterbalance of the King audio and the Malcolm X video. The two play from opposite ends of the room, so students listening to each can clearly understand the source at their station. Nevertheless, throughout the entire class, students hear both leaders in the background. Students often mention that hearing the two simultaneously can be confusing. Of course. That is how Americans in the 1960s felt, with different ideas coming into different ears, not knowing whom to believe and whom to follow.

The concluding discussion for this collage centers around a question: Which single document would you choose if you were teaching

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about the Civil Rights movement in a secondary school class? Such a technique is ideal for teacher-education students, but it is also a thought-provoking exercise for any undergraduate student. Of course, there is no single answer. The story of the 1960s is not one-dimensional, nor is it easy to understand. We should not attempt to provide students with a simplistic, sanitized, easy-to-follow narrative. Students need to wrestle with the chaos of the era, fashioning historical understanding from a wide variety of sources.

In the end, the students have a sense of the period in its complexity. Such a technique works for any historical era, whether it be the Colorado Gold Rush or Latin American independence movements. The students do not passively absorb a lecture; they learn through their interaction with the stuff of history. The collage stands up to critics of active learning. Trifan criticized active learning as being "intellectually deficient . . . and irrelevant to the discipline of history." Quite the contrary—this activity begins with the intellectual source of history, the historical document, and ends with students taking part in processes absolutely fundamental to the discipline. But they are doing the learning, just as historians discover an understanding of a time period through our understanding of primary sources.

In Geography

Modeling geographic inquiry means having undergraduate students use the tools of the discipline to craft their own interpretation of spaces and places, past or present. For geography, the tool is spatial data analysis. As a discipline, geography is extremely well suited to an inquiry-based pedagogical approach. Since its inception in the mid-1980s, the reform movement in geography education (see Bednarz and Petersen 1994), has consistently emphasized the centrality of inquiry/discovery pedagogy. Indeed, the single sentence best summarizing the entire 272-page national standards manifesto, *Geography for Life*, is: "Geography has much more to do with asking questions and solving problems than it does with rote memorization of isolated facts" (GESP 1994, 18). This was a direct rebuff of a long-standing tradition in geography education, in which students were compelled merely to memorize place locations as the means to geographic literacy. There have always been counter-movements, decrying the inadequacy of static depiction of geographic knowledge (Bednarz and Bednarz 1992). It has been a hallmark of recent reform efforts to produce instructional materials, and other forms of teacher support such as inservice institutes, in which inquiry-based ge-

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ography is consistently employed (e.g., AAG 1995; Hill, Dunn, and Klein 1995).

This is an essential point for geography educators. If one views geography as a static, completed field of inquiry—in which all discoveries have been made—then one is apt to see neither the value of learning existing geographic stories nor in learning how to find out more on one's own. Riebsame's paper clearly demonstrates that geography, as an intellectual endeavor, is far from complete. The challenge becomes presenting both the existing knowledge and preparing future citizens and teachers to learn more on their own. We must teach both fundamental knowledge and central concepts in a way that nurtures the students' own abilities to create and re-create geographical knowledge (i.e., pedagogical content knowledge).

If geographic concepts may be seen as a parallel to historical stories, then what narratives can geography instructors employ to achieve these multiple aims? Given the limited amount of geography that most students are required to take, a case-study inquiry approach seems to represent the most efficient blend of goals. The best model of this approach for geography educators is Frances Slater's *Learning Through Geography* (originally published in the UK in 1982, with a U.S. version published in 1993). Her model emphasizes having students use a variety of geographic data (not only maps but also tables, news reports, photographs, cartoons, etc.) to learn about a particular case study. These data, concerning a localized case study, provide a firm context, a real-world illustration of geographic issues and solutions. Grounded in this reality, the broader geographic concepts revealed by the case study are demonstrated as having validity, significance, and immediacy. Compelling case studies address the critical question in the mind of every student: Why should I bother learning about this? The outcomes of such an approach include development of both geographic content and skills knowledge. Manipulating data, such as converting tables into maps and analyzing spatial patterns, gives students the chance to work on developing their spatial literacy. Only through such practice can students obtain the ability to reason spatially. Analysis of the effectiveness of a British curriculum project that used this model revealed that as geographic skills are honed, student understanding of essential geographic concepts and appreciation of the spatial perspective itself are promoted (Naish, Rawling, and Hart 1987).

As a concrete example, consider how the skill of defining geographic regions is presented in a set of U.S. materials that adapted Slater's model: *GIGI (Geographic Inquiry into Global Issues;* Hill, Dunn, and Klein 1995). As part of a two-week unit about political geography called "Diversity and Nationalism," students get a complex set of

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data about the 15 former republics of the Soviet Union. For each one, students see a population table with the ethnic composition by percentage of all major groups; photographs showing various ethnic groups; text data on major languages, religions, and historical relations with Russia; and lists of products, resources, and the average income of people in the republic, compared to the USSR as a whole. Working with this array of raw data, students (in groups) are given the task of regionalizing the former USSR. Using the concept, but not the technology, of a geographic information system (GIS, a method of overlaying several maps to produce a new, composite map), students identify unifying factors to define as many regions as they see fit. Although the module includes, for comparison, the traditional geographic classification of the former USSR's regions, students create their own classification, and they are required to defend their decisions. The exercise creates more awareness of the political problems posed by ethnic diversity than one gets from simply reading about it. More importantly, students get direct experience with the methodological problems posed by defining geographic regions.

For college educators, the inquiry approach can be used even if class sizes are larger than found in the typical high school. The advantages of this data-driven model are many, including the attraction for students of seeking solutions to real-world problems (Klein 1995). In terms of developing pedagogical content knowledge, this model offers an essential quality. To develop a complex, schematic conceptual understanding, future teachers need to reflect on how they learn, processing metacognitively the means by which they have acquired new information and used it to enrich their knowledge structure. The geographic inquiry model is inductive, as it relies on students' making the leap to geographic generalizations (concepts) from specific illustrations (case studies). Because the inquiry approach relies on students' discovery of concepts, based on real data, students can consider how they reached their conclusions. Doing so helps develop their spatial reasoning skills. This follows a rich tradition in social studies, dating back to Dewey's focus on experiential education; even longer ago, Pascal said: "People are usually more convinced by reasons they discovered themselves than by those found by others." This is the power of inquiry.

To facilitate such discovery, it helps to use additional exemplars of the concept, demonstrating the validity and applicability of the generalization across spatial scales (from local to national to international). Research into the effectiveness of the GIGI project indicated that local examples of a geographic concept generate more student interest, because they resonate more with students' personal experiences and interests (Klein 1995). Undergraduate instructors in geography might do well

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to recall that in a typical K–12 scope-and-sequence, teachers focus first on teaching about the neighborhood, community, and town, before working up to expanding students' awareness of other countries and regions (Goodlad 1984). Even in college, a student is more likely to be drawn to topics that connect to his or her own understanding of the world built on personal experiences.

Use of a data-driven instructional model, however, requires that data be accessible. Teachers rarely have time to search out and assemble workable datasets; this severely constrains their use of inquiry pedagogy. Fortunately, increasingly more data is available on the Internet from both government organizations (e.g., the Census Bureau and State Department) and private companies who make datasets available to support their GIS software. Providing teachers with practice in using such data is imperative. Before teachers and other citizens can feel comfortable with geographic concepts, they first need to be comfortable working with spatial data. Teaching through data-based inquiry models the actions of geographers. For undergraduate instructors, the goal is to "do" geography, just as history educators model "doing" history.

Conclusion: The Infinite Game

To follow West's urging, we close by examining education as an "infinite game." The goal for history and geography educators is both to pass on cultural knowledge and to provide future citizens with the intellectual tools so that they themselves may expand such knowledge. For those future citizens entering the teaching profession, there is the further skill to nurture—the ability to apprehend the content structure of a field sufficiently well so that they can pass on this cultural knowledge to the next generation of novices. This is a tall order!

This leads to a final point about modeling historical and geographic inquiry in undergraduate instruction. The goal of modeling is, of course, to spark future teachers to engage in this style of teaching themselves, so that the model regenerates itself. Constantly providing practice with the analytical tools of the discipline should foster the development of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. The missing link is that these students must also learn how to select appropriate narratives and case studies. History and geography share the onus of enormously broad subject-matters, all of human time and all of Earth space. Inevitably, college teachers must select, from an infinite array, a limited number of places, issues, or events through which they will convey the central concepts of their fields. We must choose illustrations that clearly exemplify these ideas, and attractively package the concept. But what is appropri-

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ate for a college class offered in 2000 may well be passé by the time the college students are teaching their own classes several years later. We must give students the opportunity to learn how to identify content-appropriate case studies so they can use the skill later when teaching their own classes. Future teachers are liable to repeat stale tales from their college classes, rather than finding new, contemporary cases that freshly reveal the timeless historical or geographic concept unless undergraduate teacher educators offer this opportunity. We must not convey the image of a static discipline, even with a case-study, real-issues approach.

What this emphasizes is the link between undergraduate education and the ongoing, inservice education of the professional teacher. Universities play an essential role in the education of educators, but it is beyond their abilities to produce an "expert" in history or geography within the shackles of the typical four-year college program. Development of pedagogical content knowledge begins in school, but one cannot become expert at teaching until some years of experience have been gained. This is especially true in the current political climate, as legislatures attempt to constrain the amount of content preparation teacher candidates receive. University programs need to instill the value of lifelong learning in college students, so that future teachers will be motivated to pursue deeper understanding of their content areas the day after they obtain their degree. Professional educators know that learning is an infinite game; so must future teachers.

At root, the notion of the infinite game seeks out elements of continuity and connection across time and space. Historians may search for long-term trends that link past, present, and future; geographers look for broad spatial patterns that reveal consistent processes in many places. From such trends and patterns historical and geographical stories are built. But the infinite-game metaphor is also germane to this discussion about the impact of new thinking in these venerable academic disciplines. Riebsame's and West's illustrations remind us, as educators of future teachers, that these fields, despite their age, still spark debate and intellectual curiosity. Transmitting the richness of such debates to our own students is essential, so that the dynamism of history and geography is never lost. Thinking of history merely as the study of the past, or of geography merely as the study of places, robs them of this dynamic, this life. Both fields in truth embrace the study of connections. The infinite-game metaphor, with its emphasis on the continuity of historical and geographical change, affords us the chance to retain this deep, rich dimension in our teaching. Our understanding and conceptualization of the world is still proceeding.

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